

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, May 14, 2007
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Contents

Addresses and Remarks

See also Meetings With Foreign Leaders
Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and
presentation of President's Volunteer
Service Awards—607
Kansas, tornado damage in Greensburg—588,
600
Maryland, Physical Fitness Month in
Beltsville—587
Military Spouse Day and presentation of
President's Volunteer Service Awards—619
Pennsylvania, commencement address at St.
Vincent College in Latrobe—616
Radio address—587
Republican National Committee gala—610
United Kingdom, state visit of Queen
Elizabeth II
Embassy dinner—592
State dinner—591
Welcoming ceremony—589

Communications to Congress

Syria, continuation of national emergency
blocking property of certain persons and
prohibiting the export of certain goods,
message—600

Communications to Federal Agencies

Transfer of Funds From FY 2007 Economic
Support Fund Account to the International
Peacekeeping Account To Support Security
Sector Reform in Liberia, memorandum—
601
Unexpected Urgent Refugee and Migration
Needs Related to Somalia, Sudan, Chad,
Other Parts of Africa, and the West Bank
and Gaza, memorandum—616

Directives

National Continuity Policy—593

Executive Orders

Establishment of Temporary Organization To
Facilitate United States Government
Assistance for Transition in Iraq—598

Interviews With the News Media

News conference in Arlington, VA, May 10—
601

Letters and Messages

Cinco de Mayo, 2007, message—587

Meetings With Foreign Leaders

Haiti, President Preval—591
United Kingdom, Queen Elizabeth II—589,
591, 592

(Continued on the inside of the back cover.)

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Contents—continued

Notices

Continuation of the National Emergency
Blocking Property of Certain Persons and
Prohibiting the Export of Certain Goods to
Syria—599

Proclamations

Military Spouse Day—601
Mother's Day—590
National Defense Transportation Day and
National Transportation Week—609
National Safe Boating Week—610
Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police
Week—622

Statements by the President

International trade and investment policy—
608
Virginia Tech, commencement ceremonies in
Blacksburg, VA—622
Free trade agreements with Peru, Colombia,
Panama, and South Korea—609

Supplementary Materials

Acts approved by the President—626
Checklist of White House press releases—625
Digest of other White House
announcements—623
Nominations submitted to the Senate—624

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Week Ending Friday, May 11, 2007

**Message on the Observance of
Cinco de Mayo, 2007**

May 4, 2007

I send greetings to those celebrating Cinco de Mayo.

The story of Cinco de Mayo represents the triumph of liberty over tyranny and a joyful moment in Mexican history. In 1862, Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza and his militia defended their independence and won an important victory for freedom. Because of their courage, Mexican citizens would come to know the full blessings of liberty, and their triumph at the Battle of Puebla remains an inspiration to all who thirst for freedom.

Cinco de Mayo is also an opportunity to celebrate the warm ties between Mexico and the United States. Geography has made us neighbors, but our friendship is based on shared values of family, democracy, and faith. Our country is grateful for the countless contributions of Mexican Americans whose hard work and strong character have strengthened our country. On Cinco de Mayo and throughout the year, may we remember that together we can build a better life and a future of hope for both our peoples.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a festive Cinco de Mayo.

George W. Bush

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this message. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Remarks on Physical Fitness Month
in Beltsville, Maryland**

May 5, 2007

Thank you all for coming. This is Physical Fitness Month, and I'm with members of the President's Physical Fitness Council. Their

job is to encourage all Americans, young and old, to exercise.

I love exercise. Today I'm going to ride, with a group of friends, on a mountain bike. But the message to all Americans is to find time in your schedule to walk, run, swim, bike, to take care of yourselves.

I appreciate Mike Leavitt, who is the Secretary of Health and Human Services, for joining us today. He knows what I know, that if someone takes care of their body through good exercise, that it is—it's the beginning of really good health policy for the United States.

It doesn't take much time to stay fit—30 minutes, 5 days a week; 30 minutes of walking, 30 minutes of running, 30 minutes of biking, 30 minutes of swimming on a regular basis will help deal with a lot of health issues here in America. I have found that exercise not only is a good excuse to get outdoors; it helps relieve stress as well. And so, on behalf of the President's Council on Physical Fitness, I say to America, get outside, take time out of your life, schedule yourself, be disciplined, and exercise.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:19 a.m. at the U.S. Secret Service Training Facility.

The President's Radio Address

May 5, 2007

Good morning. At this hour, America's brave men and women in uniform are engaging our enemies around the world. And in this time of war, our elected officials have no higher responsibility than to provide these troops with the funds and flexibility they need to prevail.

On Wednesday, I met with congressional leaders from both parties here at the White House. We discussed ways to pass a responsible emergency war spending bill that will fully fund our troops as quickly as possible.

It was a positive meeting. Democratic leaders assured me they are committed to funding our troops, and I told them I'm committed to working with members of both parties to do just that.

I've appointed three senior members of my White House staff to negotiate with Congress on this vital legislation: my Chief of Staff Josh Bolten, National Security Adviser Steve Hadley, and Budget Director Rob Portman. By working together, I believe we can pass a good bill quickly and give our troops the resources and flexibility they need.

Earlier this week, I vetoed the bill Congress sent me because it set a fixed date to begin to pull out of Iraq, imposed unworkable conditions on our military commanders, and included billions of dollars in spending unrelated to the war. And on Wednesday, the House voted to sustain my veto by a wide margin.

I recognize that many Democratic leaders saw this bill as an opportunity to make a statement about their opposition to the war. In a democracy, we should debate our differences openly and honestly. But now it is time to give our troops the resources they are waiting for.

Our troops are now carrying out a new strategy in Iraq under the leadership of a new commander, General David Petraeus. He's an expert in counterinsurgency warfare. The goal of the new strategy he is implementing is to help the Iraqis secure their capital so they can make progress toward reconciliation and build a free nation that respects the rights of its people, upholds the rule of law, and fights extremists alongside the United States in the war on terror. This strategy is still in its early stages, and Congress needs to give General Petraeus's plan a chance to work.

I know that Republicans and Democrats will not agree on every issue in this war, but the consequences of failure in Iraq are clear. If we were to leave Iraq before the Government can defend itself, there would be a security vacuum in the country. Extremists from all factions could compete to fill that vacuum, causing sectarian killing to multiply on a horrific scale.

If radicals and terrorists emerge from this battle with control of Iraq, they would have

control of a nation with massive oil reserves, which they could use to fund their dangerous ambitions and spread their influence. The Al Qaida terrorists who behead captives or order suicide bombings would not be satisfied to see America defeated and gone from Iraq. They would be emboldened by their victory, protected by their new sanctuary, eager to impose their hateful vision on surrounding countries, and eager to harm Americans.

No responsible leader in Washington has an interest in letting that happen. I call on Congress to work with my administration and quickly craft a responsible war spending bill. We must provide our men and women in uniform with the resources and support they deserve. I'm confident that leaders of good will can deliver this important result.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:50 a.m. on May 4 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 4 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Tornado Damage in Greensburg, Kansas

May 6, 2007

Our hearts are heavy for the loss of life in Greensburg, Kansas. A tornado devastated that community. It just basically wiped it out.

I spoke to the Governor and Senator Pat Roberts about the extent of the devastation. They said to me, "It's hard to describe how bad this community was hit."

I have declared a major disaster for that community, and I hope that helps. It's going to take a long time for the community to recover. And so we will help in any way we can. There's a certain spirit in the Midwest of our country, a pioneer spirit that still exists, and I'm confident this community will be rebuilt. To the extent that we can help, we will. The most important thing now, though, is for our citizens to ask for the good Lord to comfort those who hurt.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:26 a.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, DC. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Sebelius of Kansas.

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom

May 7, 2007

President Bush. Good morning. Laura and I are honored to welcome back to the White House Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

The United Kingdom has written many of the greatest chapters in the history of human freedom. Nearly 800 years ago, the Magna Carta placed the authority of the government under the rule of law. Eighty years later, the first representative assembly of the English people met to debate public policies. Over the centuries, Parliaments in Britain established principles that guide all modern democracies. And thinkers from Britain, like Locke and Smith and Burke, showed the world that freedom was the natural right of every man, woman, and child on Earth.

As liberty expanded in the British Isles, British explorers helped spread liberty to many lands, including our own. In May of 1607, a group of pioneers arrived on the shores of the James River and founded the first permanent English settlement in North America. The settlers at Jamestown planted the seeds of freedom and democracy on American soil. And from those seeds sprung a nation that will always be proud to trace its roots back to our friends across the Atlantic.

Our two nations hold fundamental values in common. We honor our traditions and our shared history. We recognize that the strongest societies respect the rights and dignity of the individual. We understand and accept the burdens of global leadership. And we have built our special relationship on the surest foundations, our deep and abiding love of liberty.

Today, our two nations are defending liberty against tyranny and terror. We're resisting those who murder the innocent to ad-

vance a hateful ideology, whether they kill in New York or London or Kabul or Baghdad.

American and British forces are staying on the offense against the extremists and terrorists. We're supporting young democracies. Our work has been hard. The fruits of our work have been difficult for many to see. Yet our work remains the surest path to peace, and it reflects the values cherished by Americans and by Britons and by the vast majority of people across the broader Middle East.

Your Majesty, I appreciate your leadership during these times of danger and decision. You've spoken out against extremism and terror. You've encouraged religious tolerance and reconciliation. You've honored those returning from battle and comforted the families of the fallen.

The American people are proud to welcome Your Majesty back to the United States, a nation you've come to know very well. After all, you've dined with 10 U.S. Presidents. You helped our Nation celebrate its bicentennial in 17—in 1976. [Laughter]

Queen Elizabeth II. Come—[inaudible].

President Bush. She gave me a look that only a mother could give a child. [Laughter]

You have helped commemorate both the 350th and 400th anniversaries of the Jamestown settlement.

Your Majesty, the United States receives with honor the sovereign of the United Kingdom. We welcome back to the White House a good person, a strong leader for a great ally.

Queen Elizabeth II. Mr. President, thank you for your warm words. This is my fifth visit to the United States. And I believe it is important to remind ourselves of the purpose of these occasions, which gives meaning to the ceremonial symbolism and the circumstance.

A state visit provides us with a brief opportunity to step back from our current pre-occupations to reflect on the very essence of our relationship. It gives us the chance to look back at how the stories of our two countries have been inextricably woven together. It is the moment to take stock of our present friendship, rightly taking pleasure from its strengths, while never taking these for granted. And it is the time to look forward, jointly

renewing our commitment to a more prosperous, safer, and freer world.

Last week, I had the pleasure of sharing with you an extraordinary anniversary in our common history. It was a privilege to join the commemoration of the Jamestown landing by that small group of British citizens all those years ago. My 2 days in Virginia gave me a new insight into those events, which helped to shape this country's development and to lay the foundations of this great Nation based on shared principles of equality, democracy, and the rule of law.

And now in Washington, we have a further opportunity to acknowledge the present strength of our relationship. I shall enjoy not only renewing old acquaintances and making new ones but also recognizing the breadth and depth of the friendship we have shared for so long. We can celebrate the close and enduring associations which thrive between the United States and the United Kingdom at every level, be it government or corporate, institutional or personal.

This visit also gives us a window on the future, both the future of the United States and the future cooperation between our countries. I particularly look forward in the next 2 days to seeing at firsthand something of how the cutting edge of science and technology can take us to the next phases of discovery and exploration in human endeavor.

Mr. President, thank you for inviting Prince Philip and me to visit your country, to share in the commemoration of the Jamestown anniversary, and to have this opportunity to underline the extent of our friendship—past, present, and future. It is indeed a pleasure for us to be here in Washington again and to be welcomed back to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:07 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House where the Queen was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors.

Proclamation 8140—Mother's Day, 2007

May 7, 2007

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Motherhood is one of the most cherished and valued roles in our society. On Mother's Day, we pay tribute to these dedicated women who give unconditional love and guidance to their children.

A mother's work requires extraordinary patience and compassion, and her example influences the formation of young lives. President Gerald Ford wrote that "there is no undertaking more challenging, no responsibility more awesome, than that of being a mother." Mothers make great sacrifices and serve as caregivers and role models to help their children embrace dreams and aspirations. From these remarkable women, children learn character and values, the importance of giving back to their communities, and the courage to realize their potential. Mothers of military personnel provide support and encouragement while their sons and daughters defend our freedom in places far from home, and many mothers bring honor to the uniform of the United States while working to lay the foundations of peace for generations to come.

The bond between mothers and their children is one defined by love. As a mother's prayers for her children are unending, so are the wisdom, grace, and strength they provide to their children. On Mother's Day, we are reminded of the great debt we owe to our Nation's mothers for their love and devotion to their sacred duty.

To honor mothers, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 8, 1914, as amended (38 Stat. 770), has designated the second Sunday in May each year as "Mother's Day" and has requested the President to call for its appropriate observance. Throughout the year, and especially on this day, America's sons and daughters honor our mothers and celebrate their selfless gift of love.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,
President of the United States of America,

do hereby proclaim May 13, 2007, as Mother's Day. I encourage all Americans to show their gratitude and love to mothers for making a difference in the lives of their children, families, and communities. I call upon citizens to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:51 a.m., May 9, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 10.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom

May 7, 2007

President Bush. Your Majesty and Your Royal Highness, distinguished guests: Laura and I offer you a warm welcome to the White House. We're really glad you're here.

Tonight is the fourth state dinner held in Your Majesty's honor here at the White House. On previous such occasions, you've been welcomed by President Eisenhower, President Ford, and another President named Bush. [*Laughter*] Over your long reign, America and Britain have deepened our friendship and strengthened our alliance.

Our alliance is rooted in the beliefs that we share. We recognize that every individual has dignity and matchless value. We believe that the most effective governments are those that hold themselves accountable to their people. And we know that the advance of freedom is the best hope for lasting peace in our world.

Based on our common values, our two nations are working together for the common good. Together we are supporting young democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan. Together we're confronting global challenges such as poverty and disease and terrorism. And together we're working to build a world in

which more people can enjoy prosperity and security and peace.

Friendships remain strong when they are continually renewed, and the American people appreciate Your Majesty's commitment to our friendship. We thank you for helping us celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown settlement. We're confident that Anglo-American friendship will endure for centuries to come.

So, on behalf of the American people, I offer a toast to Your Majesty, to Your Royal Highness, and to our staunch allies, the valiant people of the United Kingdom.

Queen Elizabeth II. Thank you very much, indeed.

President Bush. Your turn, Your Majesty.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Queen Elizabeth II.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Rene Garcia Preval of Haiti

May 8, 2007

President Bush. I appreciate very much the President of Haiti joining us here in the Oval Office. Mr. President, welcome. I thank you for your courage. I thank you for having one of the toughest jobs in the world, and that is to bring prosperity and security to your country.

While there is still a lot of work to be done, there's progress being made on a variety of fronts. The security situation is improving somewhat, and the United States supports the U.N. mission in Haiti. The economy is improving; inflation is down; exports are up. Yet there's still a lot of work to be done. And, Mr. President, I praise your efforts on establishing rule of law and routing out corruption. And the United States wants to help you.

The United States is proud to support the men and women of Haiti in a variety of ways. One among the most notable programs and one of which I'm particularly proud is our PEPFAR program, the program to help deal with HIV/AIDS. The President mentioned

other ways that we can help—in fighting drugs, drug traffickers. I was particularly pleased that he brought up the idea of helping the education system in Haiti. And I have instructed Secretary Rice, along with our Ambassador, to work with the Government, see if we can help.

And finally, the President was very concerned about the status of Haitians who are here in America. I assured him that I am working hard to get a comprehensive immigration bill passed out of the Congress this year. As a man who cares deeply about the people of Haiti, it's—I am pleased that he has expressed his concerns. And I think, Mr. President, with hard work and good will, we can get a bill that will satisfy your concerns.

We welcome you. Thanks for coming.

President Preval. I thank President Bush for his invitation. And this was a chance for me to describe to him our situation and the expectations of the Haitian people.

The purpose of this mission was to explain the situation in Haiti, and President Bush noted with interest the points that were raised. I'm not going to come back to them right now, but I would like to thank the United States for the fraternal aid it has given Haiti. And I would particularly like to thank President Bush for the HOPE bill and for the efforts made for its reinforcing the judicial system, the police force, and also to help strengthen the Haitian State.

I also took this chance to express my condolences to President Bush and to the American people for the tragedy that you've been through in Kansas. Each time someone suffers, we all suffer. And I would like to ask President Bush to transmit in my name and in the name of the Haitian people our condolences to the American people.

Peace has been restored, and the conditions for investment are here. Haiti is awaiting American investors. We've opened a campaign to fight against corruption and contraband so that all can be on a level playing field and for conditions for competition to be right. Therefore, investors will not have to fear in terms of security or corruption, and they can come to Haiti, because what we need in Haiti are jobs.

And I would also like to thank the President for his assistance in the fight against the

plague, which is the drug trade. Drugs in Haiti represent a force, and Haiti alone cannot fight against the drug trade. It always weakens the state and corrupts the state. And it doesn't—the drug trade does not function well with a strong state or a healthy state. It tries to corrupt the police force; it tries to corrupt the judiciary and the executive. And drug trafficking thrives in a weak state. Drug traffickers invest in weakening and destabilizing the state. And I would like to thank the President who, through the DEA, is helping us in this effort against the plague of drugs.

And I will end on a note of hope, because we have countrymen who are here illegally and are living in a difficult situation. The President has promised to work on an immigration bill that will help improve the lives of our countrymen here in the United States.

Thank you.

President Bush. Good job. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Janet A. Sanderson. President Preval spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a Dinner With Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom

May 8, 2007

Queen Elizabeth II. Mr. President, I wondered whether I should start this toast saying, "When I was here in 1776." But I don't think I will. [Laughter]

Mr. President, it is a real pleasure to welcome you and Mrs. Bush here this evening. Over our 6 days in the United States, we have much enjoyed the chance to dwell on the history of the relationship between our two countries, as well as celebrating its present strength and vitality. I would like to thank everyone for the warmth and kindness extended to us.

I would also like to take this opportunity, on the day that has seen the formal transfer of power to the devolved Northern Ireland Government, to thank you and your predecessors for your contribution to bringing peace to Northern Ireland.

May I ask everyone to rise and drink a toast to President and Mrs. Bush, to the future of our two countries, and the enduring friendship between Britain and the United States.

Mr. President.

[At this point, the Queen offered a toast.]

President Bush. Your Majesty, I can't top that one. [Laughter]

Your Royal Highness, distinguished guests, thank you so much for a warm welcome. Laura and I appreciate your hospitality. I particularly want to thank Ambassador Manning and Lady Manning for inviting us to your home.

The friendship between the British and American people is one of the oldest and most enduring in history. This friendship has been built on the common ideal of freedom and forged by our shared sacrifices in freedom's defense.

Your Majesty, I appreciate your visit to our World War II Memorial. I thank you for sharing your perspective last night on how the Atlantic Alliance that emerged from a great conflict has helped lay the foundation for freedom's triumph in Europe and beyond.

Today, British and American troops are following the example set by a previous generation. Troops from our two countries are serving side by side to bring the hope of liberty to regions that have not known it. Together we're supporting young democracies that are taking their first steps on the path to free and peaceful societies.

This morning, the world witnessed yet another advance for freedom and peace—the people of Northern Ireland took control of their future when Catholics and Protestants came together to form a new Government that offers the prospect of peace and reconciliation after years of violence and division. In Belfast today, we're seeing once again how democracy and freedom can help heal a wounded world.

Your Majesty, thank you for your words tonight and for the love and affection you have shown the American people over many years. In this spirit, I offer a toast to Your Majesty, to Your Royal Highness, and to our closest of friends, the British people.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. at the British Embassy. In his remarks, he referred to Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh; and the United Kingdom's Ambassador to the U.S. Sir David Manning and his wife, Catherine.

Directive on National Continuity Policy

May 4, 2007

National Security Presidential Directive/
NSPD-51

Homeland Security Presidential Directive/
HSPD-20

Subject: National Continuity Policy

Purpose

(1) This directive establishes a comprehensive national policy on the continuity of Federal Government structures and operations and a single National Continuity Coordinator responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of Federal continuity policies. This policy establishes "National Essential Functions," prescribes continuity requirements for all executive departments and agencies, and provides guidance for State, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and private sector organizations in order to ensure a comprehensive and integrated national continuity program that will enhance the credibility of our national security posture and enable a more rapid and effective response to and recovery from a national emergency.

Definitions

(2) In this directive:

- (a) "Category" refers to the categories of executive departments and agencies listed in Annex A to this directive;
- (b) "Catastrophic Emergency" means any incident, regardless of location, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the U.S. population, infrastructure, environment, economy, or government functions;
- (c) "Continuity of Government," or "COG," means a coordinated effort

within the Federal Government's executive branch to ensure that National Essential Functions continue to be performed during a Catastrophic Emergency;

- (d) "Continuity of Operations," or "COOP," means an effort within individual executive departments and agencies to ensure that Primary Mission-Essential Functions continue to be performed during a wide range of emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents, and technological or attack-related emergencies;
- (e) "Enduring Constitutional Government," or "ECG," means a cooperative effort among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the Federal Government, coordinated by the President, as a matter of comity with respect to the legislative and judicial branches and with proper respect for the constitutional separation of powers among the branches, to preserve the constitutional framework under which the Nation is governed and the capability of all three branches of government to execute constitutional responsibilities and provide for orderly succession, appropriate transition of leadership, and interoperability and support of the National Essential Functions during a catastrophic emergency;
- (f) "Executive Departments and Agencies" means the executive departments enumerated in 5 U.S.C. 101, independent establishments as defined by 5 U.S.C. 104(1), Government corporations as defined by 5 U.S.C. 103(1), and the United States Postal Service;
- (g) "Government Functions" means the collective functions of the heads of executive departments and agencies as defined by statute, regulation, presidential direction, or other legal authority, and the functions of the legislative and judicial branches;
- (h) "National Essential Functions," or "NEFs," means that subset of Government Functions that are necessary to lead and sustain the Nation during

a catastrophic emergency and that, therefore, must be supported through COOP and COG capabilities; and

- (i) "Primary Mission Essential Functions," or "PMEFs," means those Government Functions that must be performed in order to support or implement the performance of NEFs before, during, and in the aftermath of an emergency.

Policy

(3) It is the policy of the United States to maintain a comprehensive and effective continuity capability composed of Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Government programs in order to ensure the preservation of our form of government under the Constitution and the continuing performance of National Essential Functions under all conditions.

Implementation Actions

(4) Continuity requirements shall be incorporated into daily operations of all executive departments and agencies. As a result of the asymmetric threat environment, adequate warning of potential emergencies that could pose a significant risk to the homeland might not be available, and therefore all continuity planning shall be based on the assumption that no such warning will be received. Emphasis will be placed upon geographic dispersion of leadership, staff, and infrastructure in order to increase survivability and maintain uninterrupted Government Functions. Risk management principles shall be applied to ensure that appropriate operational readiness decisions are based on the probability of an attack or other incident and its consequences.

(5) The following NEFs are the foundation for all continuity programs and capabilities and represent the overarching responsibilities of the Federal Government to lead and sustain the Nation during a crisis, and therefore sustaining the following NEFs shall be the primary focus of the Federal Government leadership during and in the aftermath of an emergency that adversely affects the performance of Government Functions:

- (a) Ensuring the continued functioning of our form of government under the

Constitution, including the functioning of the three separate branches of government;

- (b) Providing leadership visible to the Nation and the world and maintaining the trust and confidence of the American people;
- (c) Defending the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and preventing or interdicting attacks against the United States or its people, property, or interests;
- (d) Maintaining and fostering effective relationships with foreign nations;
- (e) Protecting against threats to the homeland and bringing to justice perpetrators of crimes or attacks against the United States or its people, property, or interests;
- (f) Providing rapid and effective response to and recovery from the domestic consequences of an attack or other incident;
- (g) Protecting and stabilizing the Nation's economy and ensuring public confidence in its financial systems; and
- (h) Providing for critical Federal Government services that address the national health, safety, and welfare needs of the United States.

(6) The President shall lead the activities of the Federal Government for ensuring constitutional government. In order to advise and assist the President in that function, the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (APHS/CT) is hereby designated as the National Continuity Coordinator. The National Continuity Coordinator, in coordination with the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA), without exercising directive authority, shall coordinate the development and implementation of continuity policy for executive departments and agencies. The Continuity Policy Coordination Committee (CPCC), chaired by a Senior Director from the Homeland Security Council staff, designated by the National Continuity Coordinator, shall be the main day-to-day forum for such policy coordination.

(7) For continuity purposes, each executive department and agency is assigned to a

category in accordance with the nature and characteristics of its national security roles and responsibilities in support of the Federal Government's ability to sustain the NEFs. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall serve as the President's lead agent for coordinating overall continuity operations and activities of executive departments and agencies, and in such role shall perform the responsibilities set forth for the Secretary in sections 10 and 16 of this directive.

(8) The National Continuity Coordinator, in consultation with the heads of appropriate executive departments and agencies, will lead the development of a National Continuity Implementation Plan (Plan), which shall include prioritized goals and objectives, a concept of operations, performance metrics by which to measure continuity readiness, procedures for continuity and incident management activities, and clear direction to executive department and agency continuity coordinators, as well as guidance to promote interoperability of Federal Government continuity programs and procedures with State, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and private sector owners and operators of critical infrastructure, as appropriate. The Plan shall be submitted to the President for approval not later than 90 days after the date of this directive.

(9) Recognizing that each branch of the Federal Government is responsible for its own continuity programs, an official designated by the Chief of Staff to the President shall ensure that the executive branch's COOP and COG policies in support of ECG efforts are appropriately coordinated with those of the legislative and judicial branches in order to ensure interoperability and allocate national assets efficiently to maintain a functioning Federal Government.

(10) Federal Government COOP, COG, and ECG plans and operations shall be appropriately integrated with the emergency plans and capabilities of State, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and private sector owners and operators of critical infrastructure, as appropriate, in order to promote interoperability and to prevent redundancies and conflicting lines of authority. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall coordinate the integration of Federal continuity plans

and operations with State, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and private sector owners and operators of critical infrastructure, as appropriate, in order to provide for the delivery of essential services during an emergency.

(11) Continuity requirements for the Executive Office of the President (EOP) and executive departments and agencies shall include the following:

- (a) The continuation of the performance of PMEFs during any emergency must be for a period up to 30 days or until normal operations can be resumed, and the capability to be fully operational at alternate sites as soon as possible after the occurrence of an emergency, but not later than 12 hours after COOP activation;
- (b) Succession orders and pre-planned devolution of authorities that ensure the emergency delegation of authority must be planned and documented in advance in accordance with applicable law;
- (c) Vital resources, facilities, and records must be safeguarded, and official access to them must be provided;
- (d) Provision must be made for the acquisition of the resources necessary for continuity operations on an emergency basis;
- (e) Provision must be made for the availability and redundancy of critical communications capabilities at alternate sites in order to support connectivity between and among key government leadership, internal elements, other executive departments and agencies, critical partners, and the public;
- (f) Provision must be made for reconstitution capabilities that allow for recovery from a catastrophic emergency and resumption of normal operations; and
- (g) Provision must be made for the identification, training, and preparedness of personnel capable of relocating to alternate facilities to support the continuation of the performance of PMEFs.

(12) In order to provide a coordinated response to escalating threat levels or actual emergencies, the Continuity of Government Readiness Conditions (COGCON) system establishes executive branch continuity program readiness levels, focusing on possible threats to the National Capital Region. The President will determine and issue the COGCON Level. Executive departments and agencies shall comply with the requirements and assigned responsibilities under the COGCON program. During COOP activation, executive departments and agencies shall report their readiness status to the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary's designee.

(13) The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall:

- (a) Conduct an annual assessment of executive department and agency continuity funding requests and performance data that are submitted by executive departments and agencies as part of the annual budget request process, in order to monitor progress in the implementation of the Plan and the execution of continuity budgets;
- (b) In coordination with the National Continuity Coordinator, issue annual continuity planning guidance for the development of continuity budget requests; and
- (c) Ensure that heads of executive departments and agencies prioritize budget resources for continuity capabilities, consistent with this directive.

(14) The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall:

- (a) Define and issue minimum requirements for continuity communications for executive departments and agencies, in consultation with the APHS/CT, the APNSA, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and the Chief of Staff to the President;
- (b) Establish requirements for, and monitor the development, implementation, and maintenance of, a comprehensive communications architecture to integrate continuity components, in consultation with the APHS/CT, the APNSA, the Director of the

- Office of Management and Budget, and the Chief of Staff to the President; and
- (c) Review quarterly and annual assessments of continuity communications capabilities, as prepared pursuant to section 16(d) of this directive or otherwise, and report the results and recommended remedial actions to the National Continuity Coordinator.
- (15) An official designated by the Chief of Staff to the President shall:
- (a) Advise the President, the Chief of Staff to the President, the APHS/CT, and the APNSA on COGCON operational execution options; and
 - (b) Consult with the Secretary of Homeland Security in order to ensure synchronization and integration of continuity activities among the four categories of executive departments and agencies.
- (16) The Secretary of Homeland Security shall:
- (a) Coordinate the implementation, execution, and assessment of continuity operations and activities;
 - (b) Develop and promulgate Federal Continuity Directives in order to establish continuity planning requirements for executive departments and agencies;
 - (c) Conduct biennial assessments of individual department and agency continuity capabilities as prescribed by the Plan and report the results to the President through the APHS/CT;
 - (d) Conduct quarterly and annual assessments of continuity communications capabilities in consultation with an official designated by the Chief of Staff to the President;
 - (e) Develop, lead, and conduct a Federal continuity training and exercise program, which shall be incorporated into the National Exercise Program developed pursuant to Homeland Security Presidential Directive-8 of December 17, 2003 ("National Preparedness"), in consultation with an official designated by the Chief of Staff to the President;
 - (f) Develop and promulgate continuity planning guidance to State, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and private sector critical infrastructure owners and operators;
 - (g) Make available continuity planning and exercise funding, in the form of grants as provided by law, to State, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and private sector critical infrastructure owners and operators; and
 - (h) As Executive Agent of the National Communications System, develop, implement, and maintain a comprehensive continuity communications architecture.
- (17) The Director of National Intelligence, in coordination with the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall produce a biennial assessment of the foreign and domestic threats to the Nation's continuity of government.
- (18) The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall provide secure, integrated, Continuity of Government communications to the President, the Vice President, and, at a minimum, Category I executive departments and agencies.
- (19) Heads of executive departments and agencies shall execute their respective department or agency COOP plans in response to a localized emergency and shall:
- (a) Appoint a senior accountable official, at the Assistant Secretary level, as the Continuity Coordinator for the department or agency;
 - (b) Identify and submit to the National Continuity Coordinator the list of PMEFs for the department or agency and develop continuity plans in support of the NEFs and the continuation of essential functions under all conditions;
 - (c) Plan, program, and budget for continuity capabilities consistent with this directive;
 - (d) Plan, conduct, and support annual tests and training, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security,

in order to evaluate program readiness and ensure adequacy and viability of continuity plans and communications systems; and

- (e) Support other continuity requirements, as assigned by category, in accordance with the nature and characteristics of its national security roles and responsibilities

General Provisions

(20) This directive shall be implemented in a manner that is consistent with, and facilitates effective implementation of, provisions of the Constitution concerning succession to the Presidency or the exercise of its powers, and the Presidential Succession Act of 1947 (3 U.S.C. 19), with consultation of the Vice President and, as appropriate, others involved. Heads of executive departments and agencies shall ensure that appropriate support is available to the Vice President and others involved as necessary to be prepared at all times to implement those provisions.

(21) This directive:

- (a) Shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and the authorities of agencies, or heads of agencies, vested by law, and subject to the availability of appropriations;
- (b) Shall not be construed to impair or otherwise affect (i) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, and legislative proposals, or (ii) the authority of the Secretary of Defense over the Department of Defense, including the chain of command for military forces from the President, to the Secretary of Defense, to the commander of military forces, or military command and control procedures; and
- (c) Is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

(22) Revocation. Presidential Decision Directive-67 of October 21, 1998 ("Enduring Constitutional Government and Continuity

of Government Operations"), including all Annexes thereto, is hereby revoked.

(23) Annex A and the classified Continuity Annexes, attached hereto, are hereby incorporated into and made a part of this directive.

(24) Security. This directive and the information contained herein shall be protected from unauthorized disclosure, provided that, except for Annex A, the Annexes attached to this directive are classified and shall be accorded appropriate handling, consistent with applicable Executive Orders.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This directive was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 9.

Executive Order 13431— Establishment of Temporary Organization To Facilitate United States Government Assistance for Transition in Iraq

May 8, 2007

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 202 of the Revised Statutes (22 U.S.C. 2656) and section 3161 of title 5, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. There is established within the Department of State, in accordance with section 3161 of title 5, United States Code, a temporary organization to be known as the Iraq Transition Assistance Office (ITAO).

Sec. 2. Purpose of the Temporary Organization. The purpose of the ITAO shall be to perform the specific project of supporting executive departments and agencies in concluding remaining large infrastructure projects expeditiously in Iraq, in facilitating Iraq's transition to self-sufficiency, and in maintaining an effective diplomatic presence in Iraq.

Sec. 3. Functions of the Temporary Organization. In carrying out its purpose set forth in section 2, the ITAO shall:

- (a) support executive departments and agencies in Iraq in their implementation of United States Government foreign assistance in Iraq;

(b) continue coordination, oversight, and reporting concerning remaining Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF) monies;

(c) assume the functions assigned to the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO) remaining as of the date of this order; and

(d) perform such other functions related to the specific project set forth in section 2 as the Secretary of State (Secretary) may assign.

Sec. 4. Personnel and Administration. (a) The ITAO shall be headed by a Director selected by the Secretary.

(b) The Secretary shall transfer from the IRMO to the ITAO the personnel, assets, liabilities, and records of the IRMO.

Sec. 5. General Provisions. (a) This order shall be implemented in accordance with applicable law, subject to the availability of appropriations, and consistent with presidential guidance.

(b) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right, benefit, or privilege, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

(c) The ITAO shall terminate at the end of the maximum period permitted by section 3161(a)(1) of title 5, United States Code, unless sooner terminated by the Secretary.

George W. Bush

The White House,
May 8, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 10, 2007]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 9, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on May 11.

**Notice—Continuation of the
National Emergency Blocking
Property of Certain Persons and
Prohibiting the Export of Certain
Goods to Syria**

May 8, 2007

On May 11, 2004, pursuant to my authority under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) and the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–175), I issued Executive Order 13338 in which I declared a national emergency authorizing the blocking of property of certain persons and prohibiting the exportation or reexportation of certain goods to Syria. On April 25, 2006, I issued Executive Order 13399 to expand the scope of this national emergency. I took these actions to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by the actions of the Government of Syria in supporting terrorism, maintaining its then-existing occupation of Lebanon, pursuing weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, and undermining United States and international efforts with respect to the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq.

Because the actions and policies of the Government of Syria continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, the national emergency declared on May 11, 2004, and the measures adopted on that date and on April 25, 2006, in Executive Order 13399, to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond May 11, 2007. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency authorizing the blocking of property of certain persons and prohibiting the exportation or reexportation of certain goods to Syria.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
May 8, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:51 a.m., May 9, 2007]

NOTE: This notice was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 9, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on May 10.

**Message to the Congress on
Continuation of the National
Emergency Blocking Property of
Certain Persons and Prohibiting the
Export of Certain Goods to Syria**
May 8, 2007

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, and expanded in scope in Executive Order 13399 of April 25, 2006, authorizing the blocking of property of certain persons and prohibiting the exportation and reexportation of certain goods to Syria, is to continue in effect beyond May 11, 2007.

The actions of the Government of Syria in supporting terrorism, interfering in Lebanon, pursuing weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, and undermining United States and international efforts with respect to the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect the national emergency declared with respect to this threat and to maintain in force the sanctions I have ordered to address this national emergency.

George W. Bush

The White House,
May 8, 2007.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 9.

**Remarks Following a Tour of
Tornado Damage in Greensburg,
Kansas**

May 9, 2007

I bring the prayers and concerns of the people of this country to this town of Greensburg, Kansas. A lot of us have seen the pictures about what happened here, and pictures don't do it justice. There is a lot of destruction. Fortunately, a lot of folks have basements here in this part of the world and lived to see another day. Unfortunately, too many died, and we offer our prayers and condolences to those who died.

I am struck by the strength of the character of the people who live here in the Plains—people who refuse to be—who refuse to have their spirit affected by this storm, as a matter of fact, who are willing to do what it takes to rebuild in a better way. America is blessed to have such people. And the people here will be—will find they're blessed to have neighbors who care, a total stranger who will come and help them.

Our role as government officials is to work with the State and local folks to get whatever help is appropriate here, whatever help is in the law to be here as quickly as possible. My mission is to—today, though, is to lift people's spirits as best as I possibly can, is to, hopefully, touch somebody's soul by representing our country and to let people know that while there was a dark day in the past, there's brighter days ahead.

And so I want to thank the Governor and I want to thank the Senators for being here. Most importantly, I want to thank the people of Greensburg and their neighbors for helping them out. God bless the people here. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. on Bay Street. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Sebelius of Kansas.

Proclamation 8141—Military Spouse Day, 2007

May 9, 2007

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

America's military spouses inspire our Nation with their sense of duty and deep devotion to our country. On Military Spouse Day, we honor the husbands and wives of those who wear the uniform of the Armed Forces of the United States.

The husbands and wives of our service members have made significant sacrifices for freedom's cause, and they are an integral part of the success of our Armed Forces. Spouses may endure long periods of separation and frequent relocations, and they often set aside their own personal and professional ambitions for the benefit of their family and the Nation. Despite tremendous personal challenges, military spouses maintain everyday life for their families here at home, while sending love, prayers, encouraging words, and care packages to their loved ones stationed around the globe.

On behalf of a grateful Nation, we salute our Nation's military spouses. For ways to support our troops, their spouses, and their families, visit americasupportsyou.mil.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 11, 2007, as Military Spouse Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities and by expressing their gratitude to the husbands and wives of those serving in the United States Armed Forces.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:16 a.m., May 11, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 10, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on May 14.

Memorandum on Transfer of Funds From FY 2007 Economic Support Fund Account to the International Peacekeeping Account To Support Security Sector Reform in Liberia

May 9, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007–18

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination on Transfer of Funds from FY 2007 Economic Support Fund Account to the International Peacekeeping Account to Support Security Sector Reform in Liberia

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 610 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (the "Act"), and section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code, I hereby determine it necessary for the purposes of the Act that \$11 million in FY 2007 funds made available under the Economic Support Fund account be transferred to, and consolidated with, funds made available under chapter 8 of part I of the Act, and such funds are hereby so transferred and consolidated.

You are hereby authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 10.

The President's News Conference in Arlington, Virginia

May 10, 2007

The President. Good morning. I've just completed a meeting with Secretary Gates and General Pace and the members of the Joint Chiefs. I appreciate your hospitality. I really enjoy coming to the Defense Department to sit at the same table with these distinguished Americans. These folks are good,

strategic thinkers. They're smart; they're capable; and we're lucky they wear the uniform.

I spent time discussing with them the needs of our military personnel as they carry out vital missions. The Joint Chiefs shared with me the latest developments and updated me on the troop rotations as they implement our new Baghdad security plan. They report that the three additional Iraqi brigades promised by the Government are in place and are conducting operations in the Baghdad area. Three additional American brigades, totaling about 12,000 troops, have taken up positions and are also conducting operations.

The Chiefs told me that the fourth American brigade of reinforcements has just entered Baghdad and its surrounding towns and that the commanders expect the fifth American brigade to be in place by the middle of June. So it's going to be another month before all the additional troops that General Petraeus has requested are on the ground and carrying out their missions in Iraq.

American reinforcements in Baghdad, along with the Iraqi security forces, are now living and working with the Iraqi people in neighborhood posts called joint security stations. These stations are a place from which American and Iraqi forces act against terrorists and insurgents and death squads. And they patrol streets to build trust and increase local cooperation. In other words, there's active engagement by Iraqi forces and coalition forces in neighborhoods throughout Baghdad and the area.

And what happens with increased presence, there's increased confidence. And with increased confidence becomes increased information, information that forces can use to go after extremists, to bring down sectarian violence that plague the capital city of that country. The level of sectarian violence is an important indicator of whether or not the strategy that we have implemented is working. Since our operation began, the number of sectarian murders has dropped substantially.

As we have surged our forces, Al Qaida is responding with their own surge. Al Qaida is ratcheting up its campaign of high-profile attacks, including deadly suicide bombings carried out by foreign terrorists. America re-

sponded, along with coalition forces, to help this young democracy, and a brutal enemy has responded as well. These attacks are part of a calculated campaign to reignite sectarian violence in Baghdad and to convince the people here in America that the effort can't succeed. We're also seeing high levels of violence because our forces are entering areas where terrorists and militia once had sanctuary. As they continue to do so, our commanders have made clear that our troops will face more fighting and increased risks in the weeks and months ahead.

As we help Iraqis bring security to their own country, we're also working with Iraqi leaders to secure greater international support for their young democracy. And last week, Secretary Rice attended an international meeting on Iraq and Egypt, and she briefed me, and she briefed Secretary Gates—there he is, right there. *[Laughter]*

The meeting included representatives from Iraq's neighbors, as well as Egypt and Bahrain and G-8 countries and the Arab League and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council. It was a robust international meeting where Iraqi leaders expressed their determination to meet a series of benchmarks they have set for political progress. In other words, they have not only told me that they're going to meet benchmarks, they've not only told Secretary Gates that they intend to meet benchmarks, but they've also told the international community they intend to do so.

These benchmarks include adoption of a national oil law and preparations for Provincial elections and progress on a new de-Ba'athification policy and a review of the Iraqi Constitution.

The nations assembled in Egypt pledged to support Iraq in these efforts. In other words, the Iraqis said, "We need help," and these nations pledged support. It was a very positive development. They're going to help Iraq secure its borders. They've said they will help stem the flow of terrorists into their country. They agreed to support the International Compact established by Iraq and the United Nations so that Iraq can reform and rebuild its economy.

For Iraqi leaders to succeed in all these efforts, their people must have security. That's why I made the decision I made; that's why we sent additional troops into Baghdad. But we need to give General Petraeus's plan time to work. There's a debate raging in Washington here about how long we're going to be there—we haven't even got all our troops there. I still find it interesting that General Petraeus was given a unanimous confirmation vote by the United States Senate after he made clear his plan, and before the plan has been fully implemented, some in Washington are saying, "You need to leave." My attitude is, General Petraeus's plan ought to be given a chance to work, and we need to give the troops under his command the resources they need to prevail.

I met with congressional leaders to discuss the way forward, last week. I fully understand Republicans and Democrats have disagreements. We should be able to agree that the consequences of failure in Iraq would be disastrous for our country. And they would be disastrous for our country. We should be able to agree that we have a responsibility to provide our men and women on the frontlines with the resources and flexibility they need to do the job we've asked them to do.

I believe that leaders of good will can deliver to our troops. And we've got to deliver it soon—time is running out—because the longer we wait, the more strain we're going to put on the military.

All Americans know the goodness and character of the U.S. Armed Forces. They are risking their lives each day to fight our enemies and to keep our people safe. Their families are making tremendous sacrifices on behalf of our country. It's important for the people who wear the uniform and their families to know that as the Commander in Chief, I'm proud of the sacrifices they have made, and the American people honors their service to our country.

And now I'll be glad to answer a couple of questions. Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press], why don't you kick it off.

War on Terror in Iraq/Emergency Supplemental Appropriations

Q. Thank you, sir. With some Republicans saying they need to see measurable progress

by September, are you willing to reevaluate troop levels then, based on what General Petraeus says? And also, are you willing to accept any consequences for benchmarks in the war funding bill?

The President. You know, I meet with a lot of people on the subject of Iraq, and I should. There's a lot of opinions on both sides of the aisle about this issue. And my message to the Members of Congress is, whatever your beliefs may be, let's make sure our troops get funded and let's make sure politicians don't tell our commanders how to conduct operations, let's don't hamstring our people in the field. That's my message.

Their message to me has been, you know, don't you think the Iraqi Government ought to do more? They recognize what I recognize and these gentlemen up here particularly recognize, that without political progress, it's going to be hard to achieve a military victory in Iraq. In other words, the military can provide security so a political process can go forward.

Look, the two questions you asked, one was about General Petraeus's report to the—back—around September about what's taking place in Baghdad. My attitude toward Congress is, why don't you wait and see what he says? Fund the troops, and let him come back and report to the American people. General Petraeus picked this date. He believes that there will be enough progress one way or the other to be able to report to the American people, to give an objective assessment about what he sees regarding the Baghdad security plan.

It's at that point in time that I'm confident that the Secretary and the Joint Chiefs will take a look at what David Petraeus says and make recommendations about troop levels based upon the conditions on the ground, which stands in stark contrast to Members of Congress who say, we're going to determine troop levels based upon politics or the latest opinion poll or how we can get our Members elected.

And the second part of your question was about benchmarks. Look, let me talk about this recent effort by Congress to fund our troops. The idea that the House of Representatives put forward is one that we will fund our troops by piecemeal. Secretary

Gates was very strong about why that's a bad idea. And the American people must understand that if you fund our troops every 2 months, you're in a—put in a position where we have to delay certain procurement, or that military contracts must be delayed. There's a lot of uncertainty in funding when it comes to 2-month cycles. So we reject that idea. It won't work.

I find it odd that the Congress is—I find it ironic that the Congress is ready to fully fund unrelated domestic spending items and only one-half of the money requested for our troops. They provide 100 percent of the money for the special interest projects that—they don't have anything to do with fighting the war on terror, and 50 percent of the money to go to those who wear our uniform. They got it wrong. They ought to provide 100 percent of the money for people who wear the uniform and leave these special pork projects out of the bill. And so I'll veto the bill if it's this haphazard, piecemeal funding. And I made that clear.

One message I have heard from people from both parties and—is that the idea of benchmarks makes sense. And I agree. It makes sense to have benchmarks as a part of our discussion on how to go forward. And so I've empowered Josh Bolten to find common ground on benchmarks, and he will continue to have dialog with both Republicans and Democrats.

You know, this bill—I believe we can get a good supplemental, and I hope it's as quick as possible. The first blush is the bad supplemental coming out of the House. Nevertheless, there is—the Senate will have a say, and then there will be a conference committee, and hopefully we can move a good bill forward as quickly as possible. These gentlemen will tell you that the longer we wait, the more it hurts our military and the families.

Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters].

Prime Minister Tony Blair/Europe's Role in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, with Prime Minister Tony Blair stepping down, are you concerned that British policy on Iraq could change significantly?

The President. First of all, I'll miss Tony Blair. He is a political figure who is capable

of thinking over the horizon. He's a long-term thinker. I have found him to be a man who's kept his word, which sometimes is rare in the political circles I run in. When Tony Blair tells you something, as we say in Texas, you can take it to the bank. We've got a relationship such that we can have really good discussions. And so I'm going to miss him. He's a remarkable person, and I consider him a good friend.

I obviously look forward to meeting with his successor. I believe that the relationship between Great Britain and America is a vital relationship. It is a relationship that has stood the test of time. And when America and Great Britain work together, we can accomplish important objectives. We share common values. We share a great history. And so I look forward to working with the—with Gordon Brown, who I presume is going to be the—maybe I shouldn't say that—I shouldn't predict who is going to be in, but I—the punditry suggests it will be him.

I have had a meeting with him and found him to be an open and engaging person. It's amazing how people make all kinds of characterizations about people in the political process, and I found him to be a easy-to-talk-to, good thinker.

Q. What do you think he'll do on Iraq? Do you feel like you're in—

The President. I think—look, yes, I believe he understands the consequences of failure. The interesting thing about the Iraq debate, by the way, is, I don't hear a lot of discussions about happens if we fail—what happens if we fail. I hear a lot of discussions about, maybe we can make good political progress based upon this issue, or let's just make sure that we constantly achieve—make political hay based upon Iraq. I hear a lot of that. But there needs to be a serious discussion about what happens if we create a vacuum into which radical movements flow.

If you're worried about Iran, then it's really important that people understand the consequences of us leaving before the job is done. I am deeply concerned about what would happen in the Middle East should America's credibility be diminished as a result of us not keeping our word, as a result of us abandoning millions of people who are

anxious to live in a stable, secure, free society. I worry about the signal it would send to Al Qaida. As I told you earlier, and as David Petraeus said—let me put it in his words—“Al Qaida is public enemy number one in Iraq.” Al Qaida also should be viewed as public enemy number one in America.

And why do I say that? Well, Al Qaida attacked us once and killed thousands of citizens on our soil. I believe they want to attack us again. I believe failure in Iraq would only embolden Al Qaida further. I know that vacuums in the Middle East are likely to be filled by radicals and extremists, who, at the very minimum, would share a common enemy, the United States and some of our strongest allies.

And so it's vital we succeed. The debate in Washington is, how fast can we withdraw—amongst some. The debate ought to be, what do we need to do to make sure that we not only don't fail but succeed?

And so I believe Gordon Brown understands the consequences of failure. But I'm looking forward to working with him. I'm looking forward to working with the new President of France. I'm looking forward to working with a lot of people in Europe to not only achieve success in Iraq but also achieve success in Afghanistan, another theater in the war on terror.

Let's see here—Roger [Roger Runnigen, Bloomberg News]. Yes, Rog. I call him “Rog.”

President-elect Nicolas Sarkozy of France/Vice President Cheney's Visit to the Middle East/Iran

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Good afternoon. You just mentioned the new leader of France, and I was going to ask you about him. Have you talked to him? Are you recruiting him as part of the coalition? Any messages for him?

And you've sent Mr. Cheney to the Middle East to visit with the other neighbors. What specifically are the requests you are making of them?

The President. Sure. First of all, Presidents don't recruit; the people elect a leader with whom I will work. And I had a—I did talk to President-elect Sarkozy, I think it was at about 8:03 Paris time. He won at 8:00,

and I called him shortly thereafter. And I'm so grateful he took my phone call. I had met with him before when he came over here and found him to be a very engaging, energetic, smart, capable person. We will have our differences, and we will have our agreements. And I'm looking forward to working with him.

Vice President Cheney is in the Middle East. His first message to the Iraqis was that they have got to speed up their clock, that—I agree with General Petraeus's assessment that there are two clocks, one ticking here in Washington and one ticking there. And they must understand that we are very serious when it comes to them passing law that enables this country to more likely reconcile. And then he'll be traveling to talk to other friends in the area.

One of the questions that many ask is, do we understand the Iranian issue well? Do we understand the consequences of Iran having a nuclear weapon—which it looks like they want to try to achieve—to get. And the answer is, absolutely. And they'll find a stalwart friend in dealing with extremism in that vital part of the world. And that—Vice President will lay out our strategy of convincing others to join us on this Iranian issue. He will point out to them that we have worked hard to convince not only the EU-3 to join with the United States in sending a clear message but also now Russia and China, and that we do have a diplomatic front. And we've got to work—to continue to work together. We've got to work to keep it together, to send a focused, concerted message.

He will also remind people that success in Iraq will be important for dealing with Iran; that if we were to listen to some of the voices in Congress and withdraw before the job was done, it would embolden Iran. In other words, there are strategic consequences to what is being said here in Washington, DC, about the Iraqi issue.

And so he's got to—it's a vital trip, and I really appreciate him going. And it looked like he had a good stop yesterday. I haven't talked to him, but it looks like he's—it looks like he had a good day yesterday, and I'm looking forward—he'll check in.

Mark [Mark Silva, Chicago Tribune].

**War on Terror in Iraq/Emergency
Supplemental Appropriations**

Q. Mr. President, in your meeting with some moderate Republicans this week, in particular Representative LaHood, who, afterwards, said, “The way forward after September, if the report is not good, is going to be difficult”——

The President. Yes.

Q.——those are his words. Are you perhaps facing an ultimatum on the war this fall with Congress?

The President. You know, first of all, I appreciate the Members coming down to the White House. We had a good exchange. It gave me a chance to share with them my feelings about the Iraqi issue. I spent time talking to them about what it meant to fail and what it means when we succeed. They expressed their opinions. They’re obviously concerned about the Iraq war, but so are a lot of other people.

I remind people—I reminded them that last fall, late fall, I had—I had been one of these people that get endlessly polled—you know, these surveys and the pollsters constantly calling people all the time, it looks like—and had asked my opinion, I’d have said, I disapprove of what was going on in Iraq. You could have put me down as part of the disapproval process—and therefore, had put a plan in place that would more likely cause me to approve of what’s going on in Iraq. That’s why I made the decision I made.

I explained to them why I made the decision I made. And I said, look, David Petraeus has got a plan, and Members of Congress—some Members of Congress won’t let him implement the plan. That doesn’t make any sense, on the one hand, for us to send him out with the unanimous confirmation by the Senate and then to deny him the troops and/or the funds necessary to get the job done. And I reminded them that we ought to give David Petraeus a chance.

I did explain to them that General Petraeus has said he’s going to come back and report to the Secretary and the Joint Chiefs and the White House and the Congress about whether or not the strategy that he thinks could work is working. And at that point in time, we will respond accordingly.

As I told people, that decisions about the posture in Iraq need to be based upon conditions on the ground. And no better person to report about the conditions on the ground than somebody who was there, and that would be General Petraeus. And at that point in time, upon the recommendation of the Secretary and the Joint Chiefs and General Petraeus, we will respond to what he says. And so I said, why don’t we wait and see what happens? Let’s give this plan a chance to work. Let’s stop playing politics. It’s one thing to have a good, honest debate about the way forward in Iraq; it’s another thing to put our troops right in the middle of that debate.

These troops deserve the money necessary to do the job. And our commanders need the flexibility necessary to do the job. And I believe this cause is necessary and it’s noble. That’s why I put those young men and women out there in the first place. It’s necessary for the peace and security of our country. It’s noble to have such amazing citizens volunteer to go into harm’s way. And our Congress needs to support them. It’s one thing to have a political debate or a debate about strategies; it’s another thing to make sure that money gets sent to them on a timely basis. I repeat: This idea of funding our troops every 2 months is not adequate, and I, frankly, don’t think it’s right. They need to give these troops what they—what the military has asked for them.

And we can debate Iraq—and should. But there should be no debate about making sure that money gets there on a timely basis so our kids can do the job we’ve asked them to do.

I want to thank you all for your time.

NOTE: The President’s news conference began at 12:06 p.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates; Gen. Peter Pace, USMC, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Prime Minister Tony Blair and Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom; and President-elect Nicolas Sarkozy of France.

Remarks on the Observance of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and Presentation of the President's Volunteer Service Awards

May 10, 2007

Thanks for coming, and welcome to the White House. I'm glad you're here. Fifteen years ago, my dad—or as we call him around the house, “number 41”—signed a law designating May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. This afternoon, number 43—[laughter]—has the honor of continuing number 41's tradition. And we're glad you're here.

I thank you for joining me to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Across our Nation, Americans of Asian Pacific descent are leaders in fields from education to business to government. Every day, Asian Pacific Americans make our communities more vibrant, and this afternoon we honor the many contributions that are made to our great democracy.

I want to thank Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao for being here today. Madam Secretary, we're proud you're here. Thank you for serving. A former member of my Cabinet, now retired—well, not exactly retired—[laughter]—but a close friend, Norm Mineta is with us. Thanks for coming, Mr. Secretary. You're looking pretty good. Yes, I see that. [Laughter] I appreciate the fact that Deputy Secretary of Commerce David Sampson is here. He cannot claim any Asian American heritage, but nevertheless, he is serving well. [Laughter] Thank you for coming.

I appreciate the members of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islanders who are here today. Thanks for serving. Thanks for your good work. I want to thank the recipients of the President's Volunteer Service Award. We will talk about you all a little later on here. But we're honored you're here.

I do want to thank the members of the diplomatic corps who have joined us. Ambassadors, thank you for being here. We're honored to have—by your presence.

I do want to thank World War II veterans and Japanese American veterans who have joined us today. We're proud to have you here, and thanks for this great example

you've set for those who wear the uniform today. We're really glad you're here.

The story of Asian Pacific Americans is an important part of the American story. During the 19th century, Asian Pacific Americans endured great hardships, for example, to lay the tracks for our first transcontinental railroad. During times of war, Asian Pacific Americans have defended our Nation with honor and courage. And during times of prejudice, Asian Pacific Americans have overcome discrimination to build strong and lasting communities in our country.

Today, more than 15 million Americans can trace their lineage to Asia or the Pacific Islands. We see the influence of these Asian Pacific Americans across all our society. All you have to do is look to see the tremendous impact our fellow citizens are making. It's a great passion for art and music which brings new culture—new life to our cultures. The love of learning has helped improve our schools and raise the standards for all children. A commitment to innovation and free enterprise has helped strengthen our economy and created jobs.

In 2004, I formed a Presidential Advisory Commission to examine ways of expanding economic opportunities for Asian Pacific Americans. And tomorrow I will receive the Commission's final report, and I'm looking forward to getting it.

As Asian Pacific Americans realize the opportunities of our Nation, they're also answering the call to give back to our communities, and by doing so, they create new opportunities for others. Men and women of Asian Pacific descent volunteer their talents and time to help their neighbors in a lot of ways. This afternoon we honor six Americans of Asian Pacific heritage with our Nation's highest honor for community service: the President's Volunteer Service Award.

The volunteers we recognize have set a powerful example for all Americans. They have served important causes, from providing aid to victims of natural disasters to sharing the joy of science with students to raising money for libraries in far away lands. These acts of kindness have changed lives; they've laid the foundation for stronger communities; and they really speak to the strength of

America. Our strength is not our military, although we'll keep it strong, and our strength is not necessarily the size of our economy, although we'll keep it robust. The true strength of the country lies in the hearts and souls of citizens who hear the call to love a neighbor and do something about it.

One of the honorees is a Virginia Tech student. I had the privilege of meeting Adeel Khan. See, Adeel is the president of the student government at Virginia Tech. He took office shortly before the terrible violence hit that campus. He's had what we're call a difficult presidency. *[Laughter]* And yet he understood the need for leadership. He's an impressive guy. He worked hard with classmates to organize a campus-wide vigil. He helped bring that important community together. He dealt with the tragedy the way you'd expect a leader to deal with tragedy. This good young man helped lead his fellow students in healing. And we know, as he did so, it helped heal the entire nation.

We see the true spirit of the Asian Pacific American community in the compassion and decency of citizens like Adeel. We're grateful for the many contributions that Asian Pacific Americans have made to our Nation. We're proud to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. I congratulate all the honorees. And now I ask Lieutenant Commander Roncska to read their citations.

[At this point, Lt. Cmdr. Robert A. Roncska, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the awards.]

Thank you all for coming today. In our diversity, we find our strength; in our hearts, we find such wonderful compassion. Thank you all for setting a great example. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:26 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Statement on International Trade and Investment Policy

May 10, 2007

The United States has a longstanding commitment to open economies that empower

individuals, generate economic opportunity and prosperity for all, and provide the foundation for a free society. Economic freedom, supported by the rule of law, reinforces political freedom by encouraging and supporting the free flow of ideas. To continue the advance of liberty and prosperity, my administration will work vigorously to promote open investment policies and free trade on a level playing field.

A free and open international investment regime is vital for a stable and growing economy, both here at home and throughout the world. The threat of global terrorism and other national security challenges have caused the United States and other countries to focus more intently on the national security dimensions of foreign investment. While my administration will continue to take every necessary step to protect national security, my administration recognizes that our prosperity and security are founded on our country's openness.

As both the world's largest investor and the world's largest recipient of investment, the United States has a key stake in promoting an open investment regime. The United States unequivocally supports international investment in this country and is equally committed to securing fair, equitable, and nondiscriminatory treatment for U.S. investors abroad. Both inbound and outbound investment benefit our country by stimulating growth, creating jobs, enhancing productivity, and fostering competitiveness that allows our companies and their workers to prosper at home and in international markets. My administration is committed to ensuring that the United States continues to be the most attractive place in the world to invest. I urge other nations to join us in supporting an open investment policy and protecting international investments.

My administration is also committed to advancing free and fair trade in multilateral, regional, and bilateral negotiations. We will work aggressively to conclude the World Trade Organization's Doha Development Agenda negotiations and to secure congressional approval of the free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, Peru, and South

Korea. The prospects for the Doha Development Agenda negotiations to produce significant new economic opportunities, particularly in developing countries, demand that we do everything possible to reach an outcome that creates new trade flows and strengthens global development.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Statement on the Free Trade Agreements With Peru, Colombia, Panama, and South Korea

May 10, 2007

I am pleased that my administration and congressional leaders have concluded a bipartisan agreement that provides a clear path for advancing our proposed free trade agreements with Peru, Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. Expanding opportunities for the sale of American goods and services is crucial to continued growth and job creation here in America. While these agreements will move forward independently, my administration is committed to working with Members of Congress and with the governments of our free trade agreement partners to secure the approval of each agreement. I also look forward to working with the Congress to extend trade promotion authority to negotiate agreements that open markets and generate new economic opportunities.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Proclamation 8142—National Defense Transportation Day and National Transportation Week, 2007

May 10, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation's transportation infrastructure is vital to our security, competitiveness, and prosperity and is critical to the everyday lives

of our citizens. On National Defense Transportation Day and during National Transportation Week, we salute those in the transportation industry who work to help keep our Nation safe and moving.

America is strengthened by transportation that helps to safely and efficiently transport our troops, deliver supplies, and serve in emergency situations. My Administration is committed to maintaining and modernizing our vast transportation infrastructure to serve the country's needs now and in the future. We continue to improve the safety and security of our roads, bridges, seaports, mass transit systems, airports, airplanes, and pipelines. Protecting our transportation systems increases safety for all our citizens and helps sustain our economy.

In addition to keeping Americans safe, our transportation system is critical to our citizens' everyday lives. Americans depend on our safe, reliable, and efficient infrastructure to travel for work or pleasure. Through the Department of Transportation, we are working to reduce congestion and improve the performance of America's transportation system.

There are many transportation professionals and military service members across our Nation who work to help ensure that our transportation systems run smoothly and continue to protect our homeland. We are grateful for their dedication and service, and we recognize their important contributions to making America's transportation system the strongest and most reliable in the world.

To recognize the men and women who work in the transportation industry and who contribute to our Nation's well-being and defense, the Congress, by joint resolution approved May 16, 1957, as amended (36 U.S.C. 120), has designated the third Friday in May of each year as "National Defense Transportation Day," and, by joint resolution approved May 14, 1962, as amended (36 U.S.C. 133), declared that the week during which that Friday falls be designated as "National Transportation Week."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Friday, May 18, 2007, as National Defense Transportation Day and May 13 through May 19, 2007, as National

Transportation Week. I encourage all Americans to learn how our modern transportation system contributes to the security of our citizens and the prosperity of our country and to celebrate these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:08 a.m., May 14, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on May 15.

Proclamation 8143—National Safe Boating Week, 2007

May 10, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Millions of Americans take advantage of and participate in the special beauty of our Nation's waterways. During National Safe Boating Week, we renew our commitment to raising awareness about the importance of making safe and sound boating decisions on the water.

America's rivers, lakes, and oceans are wonderful places for boaters to gather with friends and family while enjoying the outdoors. As they do so, it is important that individuals avoid risky behaviors that can lead to boating accidents. Factors such as careless and reckless operation, inattention, and excessive speed contribute to accidents. To help ensure that individuals stay safe on America's waterways, the United States Coast Guard urges citizens to take basic safety precautions such as wearing a life jacket, participating in a boat safety course, getting a free vessel check, and never boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs. By practicing responsible boating habits, citizens can help contribute to a safer, more enjoyable experience on the water.

In recognition of the importance of safe boating practices, the Congress, by joint resolution approved June 4, 1958 (36 U.S.C. 131), as amended, has authorized and requested the President to proclaim annually the 7-day period prior to Memorial Day weekend as "National Safe Boating Week."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 19 through May 25, 2007, as National Safe Boating Week. I encourage the Governors of the 50 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, to join in observing this week. I also urge all Americans to learn more about safe boating practices and always engage in proper and responsible conduct while on the water.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:08 a.m., May 14, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on May 15.

Remarks at a Republican National Committee Gala

May 10, 2007

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Please be seated, unless, of course, you don't have a chair. [Laughter] I'm glad you're here. And I'm glad I'm here with you, and I thank you. Thanks for coming; thanks for supporting the Republican Party. Here's our mission. Our mission is to keep the White House in 2008 and retake the Senate and the House. And you're helping, and you're helping a lot, and I really appreciate it.

I appreciate my friend Senator Mel Martinez for being the general chairman of the Republican National Committee. You know, I believe—I believe that he is the first RNC chairman to speak English as a second language. [Laughter] Some people think I'm the

first President who can make the same claim. [Laughter]

But I'm proud to be with Mel and Michael Duncan and Elliott Broidy and all the good folks who are helping to make sure that we're ready to run a vibrant and active campaign in 2008.

I wish Laura were here. No, I know it. I know. I'm proud of her. She is a gracious, lovely person. And I am a lucky man to have had her by my side during this fantastic experience of being your President. She sends her love, and she sends her best. I want to—yes, I love her, too. Yes, she's good. [Laughter]

Audience member. I love you, too.

The President. Thank you. Well, it's one of these kind of interactive crowds. [Laughter]

I've learned something about how you win campaigns. I've been through a few, myself. I have found that if you stand for something the people will believe in you. If you stand on principles and enunciate that which you believe, the people will follow. And so as we head into campaign season next year, it's very important for the Republican Party to enunciate that which we believe, to stand for something, not be one of these parties that takes a focus group to tell us what to believe but to tell people what we believe and what those beliefs are—beliefs etched in our soul.

I believe that everybody has the right to be free. I believe freedom is universal. I believe this country needs a strong national defense. I believe that the best way to encourage economic vitality so that people can realize the American Dream is through less government and more entrepreneurship. I believe that the government ought to trust in the judgment of ordinary citizens. I believe that technologies can help transform the world in a better way. And I believe when we find somebody who hurts, we ought to encourage faith-based and community groups to surround them with love. That's what I believe.

These are difficult times for the United States. These are troubling times because we're a nation at war. I wish I could report that was not the case. But it is the case. And the most solemn obligation of government is to protect the American people from harm.

Our most solemn duty is to use all our powers to protect you from further attack.

I must tell you that my attitude toward the world changed dramatically on September the 11th, 2001. It was a day that affected our Nation deeply, and it affected me as President. And I vowed on that day and the days following that attack that I wouldn't tire, I wouldn't weary, that I would use all my capacities to rally the American people and the assets of this country to protect you.

The enemy we face is fearless. They're mean. They know new—they know new—they know no boundaries of civilization as we know it, see. They kill to impose their will. It's hard for Americans to believe that we face such evil people, but we do. And the fundamental question facing this country is that—will we have the will to face the threats of the 21st century?

I have put forth a strategy that does protect America. In the short term, we will pursue the enemy wherever we find them. It is best to defeat the enemy overseas so we don't have to face them here in America.

And so the war on terror is being fought on many fronts—in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia, the Horn of Africa, and of course, the Middle East. In the long term, the best way to defeat an enemy that believes in a hateful ideology is to support the spread of an ideology that's hopeful, an ideology that lifts people's lives, an ideology that can defeat those who try to prey on innocent young people and convince them to murder. And that ideology is the ideology of liberty.

We're implementing this strategy, and of course, the debate now centers on Iraq. And it's a tough fight. But I believe it's a necessary fight to protect the American people. There's been some progress. If you think about how far Iraq has come in a relatively short period of time, it's historic. The people there in that country have gone from life under a brutal tyrant who was an enemy of the United States to a society where 12 million Iraqis voted for one of the most modern Constitutions in the history of the Middle East, a society where people were given a chance to express their will at the polls and elect a Government.

A thinking enemy, however, realized that progress was being made and used their brutal ways to try to foment sectarian violence. The enemy we face in Iraq is a multifaceted enemy. But the enemy that's causing the car bombs, the enemy that is causing the spectacular deaths of the innocent is Al Qaida, the very same people that launched the attacks that killed nearly 3,000 citizens on our soul—soil.

I was confronted with a choice. I had a decision to make. I told people that, you know, had they—had I been one of the people that answered a poll last fall, I would have said I disapprove of what was happening in Iraq. It was not satisfactory to me of what was taking place. The sectarian violence that was deep in that society was looking like it was going to make it impossible for this young democracy to survive. You can't have your capital city as a place where murderers stalk innocent people and expect for a young democracy to be able to get its roots and to grow.

One choice was to pull back and hope that the violence wouldn't spill out across the country and out across the Middle East. The other choice that I made, in consultation with our military folks, was rather than pull back, to send reinforcements into the capital of that country, all aiming to give this young democracy an opportunity to do the reconciliation work necessary to have a country that can defend itself, govern itself, sustain itself, serves—serve as an example to other moderate people, and be an ally in the war on terror. And that's exactly what the policy is we're now following.

I asked a new general, General David Petraeus, to implement the policy. Our goal is to help the Iraqis secure their population, especially in Baghdad. The operation is still in its early stages. The fourth of five groups of soldiers we're sending into Iraq have arrived. The fifth is on its way. In other words, the operational plan that David Petraeus explained to the United States Congress is still being implemented. We don't have the full complement of troops that I told the American people we would send into Baghdad.

And yet there's some positive signs. One positive sign is that sectarian murders are down substantially, even before all our troops

have arrived to help the Iraqi citizens. Sectarian murders are down. There's—people are gaining confidence, slowly but surely, in a Government, because security is improving, and therefore, there's more tips, more information being passed on to Iraqi forces and American forces so that we can help that society have the security necessary to do the hard work. We've had successful operations against extremists, whether they be Sunni or Shi'a. We're making progress.

And now we're in a debate here in Washington, DC. And it's a debate, as you know, about whether or not to fund our troops. I think it's very important that Congress have an honest debate. And I don't question the patriotism of anyone who is expressing their views. But as I made clear to Members of Congress, a supplemental bill, a war spending bill that mandated withdrawals by an arbitrary date, or a bill that imposes restrictive conditions on our commanders, or a bill that would spend billions of dollars unrelated to the war was unacceptable, and that's why I vetoed the bill.

I will continue to reach out to Democrats and Republicans to come up with a way to get this money to our troops as quickly as possible. We're not going to agree on every issue, but we don't want to put the men and women who wear our uniform in the midst of a Washington, DC, debate. These troops need the money, and Congress needs to get it to them.

If I didn't think it was worthy, if I didn't think it was necessary, if I didn't realize and believe that it's important to defeat Al Qaida in Iraq, I wouldn't have our young men and women there in the first place. I believe this is a necessary action to protect our country.

Much of the debate doesn't focus on the consequences of failure. There's a lot of talk about withdrawal, but it's important for our fellow citizens to understand what the consequences would be if we fail, if we left before the job was done. There would be a vacuum in Iraq, and in that vacuum would flow extremists. Murderers and killers would take advantage of the lack of security. That violence could spill out across all Iraq. I believe there's a good chance the violence would spill out all across the Middle East. I know that people would take heart at the fact that

the United States of America didn't keep its commitment to the moderates and the young—this young democracy.

It would embolden Al Qaida. Al Qaida has clearly stated—the enemy that attacked America has clearly stated that they seek safe haven in Iraq, that they want to drive us from Iraq so they can have a safe haven from which to plan and plot other attacks. I know that the Iranians would see that we left before the job was done, and that would embolden them. One of the great dangers facing our children, one of the great dangers facing civilization is an Iran with a nuclear weapon. It's important that we succeed in Iraq and send a clear message to the people.

I don't want it to be said 50 years from now, "What happened to America in 2007? How come they forgot the lessons of September the 11th? How come they couldn't see the impending dangers facing a generation of Americans?" I want you to know I see the impending dangers. I understand the consequences of this historic moment. And we will succeed in Iraq.

I just want you to know our foreign policy is more than just the spread of liberty and the protection of our country. I firmly believe that to whom much is given, much is required. It's a principle on which I try to operate. It's a principle on which I make decisions. I understand the consequences of a pandemic like HIV/AIDS on the continent of Africa. The United States of America must boldly lead, must not shirk from our duty, and must help people wherever we find suffering, to the best of our ability.

I'm proud to announce that since we have put together the Presidential initiative on HIV/AIDS in Africa, there have been 850,000 people receiving antiretroviral drugs, up from 50,000 3 years ago.

People have questioned, is it a necessary action to take? I say it's necessary. I say it's necessary to help relieve human suffering. I also say it's necessary to make sure our soul is strong. The spirit of America remains intact. Our foreign policy is robust; it is aggressive; and it will lead to peace—the peace we all want.

At home, we're coming down to a campaign next year. A big issue, of course, is going to be the economy. I'm looking forward

to talking about the economy. This economy has been through a lot. You might remember the recent economic history of the United States. We went through a recession. We had the terrorist attack. We had corporate scandals. We had people doubting our capacity to grow our economy. And yet the economy has been robust. We've created 7.8 million jobs over the past 4 years; unemployment is low; inflation is low; wages are rising; the entrepreneurial spirit is strong in America. And the question is, how do we keep it that way?

I told you, one of the core principles on which I operate is, I believe we ought to trust the people of the United States to make their own decisions. And perhaps the best way to exhibit that trust is to let you keep more of your own money. When you have more money to spend, this economy benefits. And there's a debate here in Washington, DC. There's a constant struggle about who best can spend the American people's money. Well, I made up my mind a long time ago when I convinced the Congress to cut the taxes on everybody who pays taxes. The tax relief is working.

And now the question is, are we going to let that tax relief expire? My answer is, absolutely not. We need to make the tax relief permanent.

Oh, I know you'll hear them say in Washington and you'll hear them campaigning, listen, "All we've got to do is tax the rich to balance the budget." That's the same old mantra they trot out about every campaign cycle. The problem is, it doesn't work that way in Washington. Oh yes, they'll tax you. But if you're middle class, you better watch out. See, they can't raise enough money to meet their spending ambitions. They'll raise the taxes, but when they do, they'll figure out new ways to spend your money.

The best way to grow this economy and fix this deficit is to keep taxes low so the economy grows, which yields more tax revenues, and be wise about how we spend your money, be fiscally sound.

I put forth a budget that eliminates the Federal deficit—eliminates the Federal deficit within the next 5 years because we set priorities. And the top priority of this Government ought to be make sure our troops

have that which is necessary to protect the American people.

The Democrats pass budgets. They harken back to those old days of tax and spend. And I believe when it comes down to it, when they hear the clear differences of our points of view and the principles by which we make decisions, the American people don't want to return to the days of tax and spend.

I want to talk to you a little bit about education. Education is a vital issue for the United States. It's a vital issue to make sure that we're a competitive nation in the 21st century. If we don't educate our children now, the United States of America will have a hard time being the economic leader of the world. I'm an advocate of public schools. You might remember, I was once the Governor of the State of Texas. *[Applause]* I'm glad they let you into town. *[Laughter]*

I used to say this as Governor: Education is to a State what national defense is to the Federal Government. In that statement, there's some interesting principles. One, I believe in local control of schools. I believe it is essential that the governance of schools take place not in Washington but locally. I also believe, however, in this principle: that if we spend money, we want to see results, and we've got to ask about the results. We spend a fair amount of money here in Washington, DC, a lot of money on the school-children, particularly the poor school-children. And that's fine, and that's noble, and it is necessary.

So I went to Congress and said, listen, we'll spend the money, but why don't we start asking some important questions, like, can you read—*[laughter]*—can you write, can you add, and can you subtract? I believe in measurement. And I believe in measurement not because I want to punish anybody, but I believe in measuring so we can correct problems early, before it's too late. That piece of legislation is called the No Child Left Behind Act. The gap—the achievement gap is closing in America. Congress needs to reauthorize that good piece of legislation.

I'm a strong believer in technology. I believe technology will help improve American lives, and I strongly believe that technology will enable us to become less dependent on foreign oil. I believe that we can explore for

oil and gas in environmentally friendly ways, and we should. But I am deeply concerned about our dependence on oil. It creates a national security issue. Plain way of putting it is that, not everybody we buy oil from likes us. *[Laughter]* Having a dependence on foreign oil is an economic security issue. When the demand for crude oil goes up in the developing world, it causes the price of gasoline to go up here in America. Dependence on oil creates an environmental issue.

So I put forth an innovative way of dealing with our dependence on oil, and that is to promote alternative forms of energy to power our cars. I believe it makes sense to encourage automobiles to be driven by ethanol derived from corn, for example. I want American farmers growing energy for American people. I believe strongly that we ought to be spending your taxpayers' money to come up with alternative fuel sources, like switch grass. Is it possible? You bet it's possible. It's called cellulosic ethanol.

One of these days I can't wait to go out West where it's a little dry and see all the switch grass farmers that are growing product necessary to produce ethanol so you can drive it in your cars, and we become less dependent on foreign sources of oil. It's coming. And the role of the United States has got to be to lead and to promote new technologies.

We can do a good job, by the way, of using some of our power sources here in America by developing clean coal technologies. We ought to be promoting nuclear power that is safe, so that we can be responsible stewards of the environment and make sure you got electricity supplies as we head out into the 21st century. No, we got a comprehensive energy plan that makes a lot of sense, that is going to call upon the ingenuity of the American people and make sure this economy remains the leader in the world.

I want to talk about health care. There's a principle involved in health care I want to share with you, and that is we want consumers making decisions. We want patients and their doctors making decisions, not insurance agents and not the Federal Government when it comes to health care.

I called for reform in the Tax Code. I believe there ought to be a standard tax deduction for health insurance like there's a standard tax deduction for dependents. And the reason why I believe that is because I believe it's important for us to encourage the development of an individual market, so individuals can buy good health care, so there can be more risk spread across more people, so there's a vibrant market for people to be able to—if you're not employed, or if you're a small-business owner, that you can go—or employed without insurance—you can find a product that will give you that security.

What I don't want to do is encourage the Federal Government to run the health care system. I think that would be a huge mistake. I think it's important to promote policies that say the consumer matters when it comes to buying health care needs. And that's exactly what this administration is doing.

By the way, there's some other practical things we can do. We can promote health savings accounts, which all empower the individual that says, we trust you. Here's a way for you to have health insurance, and we trust you to make the decisions. We can expose prices. I don't know how many of you ever shopped for medical care. I know I haven't. I don't remember asking anybody, "Let me see the lists. How do you price your product relative to the neighbor?" I've never seen a hospital say, "Well, here's my prices compared to my—to the hospital down the road." There needs to be more transparency when it comes to pricing, so consumers can make rational choices.

One thing is for certain: We've got to make sure, if you want health care to be available and affordable, to have good policies that counter this notion of driving good docs out of business. What I'm telling you is there's too many junk lawsuits suing too many doctors, and we need to have medical liability reform in the United States of America.

I hope you get a sense of the philosophy that I think needs to be inherent in good

policy. And that is, we trust you, and we trust in the ingenuity of the American people. We believe the future is brighter. We're putting good policy in place to encourage that bright future.

I've got another job, by the way, and it's to make sure one branch of our Government is sound and solid and reflects a philosophy that I campaigned on. And it's this: Judges should strictly interpret the law and not legislate from the bench. And I will continue to name—continue to name good, solid judges that adhere to that principle.

You know, people ask me all the time, "Do you enjoy being the President?" And my answer is, absolutely. I love being your President. I like being the Commander in Chief; I enjoy being the educator in chief. I like talking about what we believe in because I firmly believe the philosophy we believe in is best for America. I believe it is the type of philosophy that inspires people. I believe it's a philosophy that inherits the greatness of our economy. I believe that we are the party of the entrepreneur. I believe we're the party of the doer, the dreamer, the people that work. I believe we're the party of low taxes. And I know we're the party of strong national defense to protect the United States of America.

And so I appreciate you coming tonight. Thanks for giving me a chance to share with you some ideas. But more importantly, thank you for contributing of your hard-earned money to make sure that this great Republican Party is ready for the task ahead.

May God bless our country. May God bless you. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:02 p.m. at the D.C. Armory. In his remarks, he referred to Michael Duncan, chairman, Republican National Committee; Elliott Broidy, chairman and chief executive officer, Broidy Capital Management; and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq.

**Memorandum on Unexpected
Urgent Refugee and Migration
Needs Related to Somalia, Sudan,
Chad, Other Parts of Africa, and the
West Bank and Gaza**

May 10, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007–19

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Unexpected Urgent Refugee and Migration Needs Related to Somalia, Sudan, Chad, Other Parts of Africa, and the West Bank and Gaza

By the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including sections 2 and 4(a)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962 (the “Act”), as amended (22 U.S.C. 2601 and 2603) and section 301 of title 3, United States Code:

(1) I hereby determine, pursuant to section 2(c)(1) of the Act, that it is important to the national interest to furnish assistance under the Act, in an amount not to exceed \$29.5 million from the United States Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund, for the purpose of meeting unexpected and urgent refugee and migration needs, including by contributions to international, governmental, and non-governmental organizations and payment of administrative expenses of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration of the Department of State, related to: (a) humanitarian needs resulting from conflicts in Somalia, Sudan, and Chad, (b) breaks in the food pipeline for refugees in Africa, and in the West Bank and Gaza; and

(2) the functions of the President in relation to this memorandum under section 2(d) of the Act, and of establishing terms and conditions under section 2(c)(1) of the Act, are assigned to you, and you may further assign such functions to any of your subordinates.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 11.

**Commencement Address at Saint
Vincent College in Latrobe,
Pennsylvania**

May 11, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you for the warm welcome. Archabbot Douglas, Your Excellency, Jim and Mary Towey, members of the faculty, members of the clergy, moms and dads, and—most important—the class of 2007: Thanks for inviting me. I am honored to be here.

Laura and I feel like we have a very special connection to St. Vincent College through the Toweys. We have come to know Jim and his family well during his time in Washington—after all, he was the Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. And now he’s attained another high office. So today, before his family, his friends, and colleagues—I would like to address Jim with two words he probably never thought he would hear from me: Mr. President. [*Laughter*]

I know he appreciates the importance I place on my speeches. He knows my style well. I want all of you to know I was very moved by a letter he recently sent me that invited me to this commencement. Here is what Mr. President said: “Mr. President, I believe that by hearing you speak, every member of the class of 2007 will leave this campus with a priceless lesson about the importance of the English language.” [*Laughter*] At least he didn’t say, “I’m proud to welcome to the podium a man, the first President for whom English was a second language.” [*Laughter*] I did call him. I said what my speech ought to be about. That’s what I asked him, what my speech ought to be about, Jim. He said, “About 10 minutes,” so here goes. [*Laughter*]

It’s a proud moment for the class of 2007. You’re the largest graduating class in your school’s history. You’re the first class to take a mandatory course in microwaving—[*laughter*]—a requirement that was imposed after you set off a record number of fire alarms while you were trying to make popcorn. [*Laughter*] You cheered the Bearcats with the Carey Crazies. You walked through the lighted arches of Melvin Platz. Some of you are the first in your family to attend college.

In a few moments, you will collect your degrees, the Ave Maria Bell will ring, and you will leave this campus with a lifetime of good memories. You've worked hard, and we're all here to congratulate you on a fabulous achievement.

I also congratulate the many people who helped make this day possible, starting with your parents, who paid your tuition and were patient, even after the phone bills arrived. [Laughter] I thank the people who have worked hard to make sure you leave with a sound and solid college degree—and that's the St. Vincent's faculty. I appreciate very much the monks of the Archabbey—the men whose prayers are surely responsible for some of the degrees being offered today. [Laughter] And so I ask the class of 2007 to continue to make these good people proud; to take what you've learned here into the world, and always live up to the high ideals that this college stands for.

At the heart of these high ideals is the name Benedict. Benedict was the saint who set down a practical guide for community life—and helped save Western civilization. Benedict was the inspiration for the man who came to this country to plant these ideals in American soil—and founded this college. And Benedict was also the inspiration for the Pope, who took his name in tribute to the Benedictine ideals of charity and community that he believes the world needs now more than ever.

These ideals of charity and community have a special resonance for Americans. From the beginning, America has offered the world a new model for strong community life. In the early 19th century, a Frenchman named Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States. He was impressed by the way Americans came together in voluntary associations to help out a neighbor in need. And in his book, "Democracy in America," he wrote something that captured the spirit of this great country. He said, "When an American asks for the cooperation of his fellow citizens, it is seldom refused. If some great and sudden calamity befalls a family, the purses of a thousand strangers are at once willingly opened."

De Tocqueville saw the good heart of America back in the early 19th century. We

continue to see the good heart of America in the early 21st century. We see it in citizens who responded to the worst atrocity on our soil with acts of selflessness and compassion. We see it in the historic new commitments our Nation has made to alleviate poverty and suffering, by feeding the hungry and fighting malaria and working to end the scourge of HIV/AIDS on the continent of Africa.

We see it in the volunteers who serve in our faith-based and community organizations—good and decent folks who are living the commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. Today, more than 61 million Americans volunteer their time to serve others, more than three-quarters of our citizens give to charity. The volunteer spirit of America makes us unique, it represents the true strength of our Nation, and it must constantly be reinvigorated and renewed.

And that's why it's vital for our country that our young people step forward and serve a cause larger than yourselves. When you serve your fellow citizens, you find benefits you'll never imagine. You discover that a caring person is sometimes all it takes for someone to turn their lives around. You see for yourself that kindness and respect make an enormous difference in a person's life. You learn to take the initiative, instead of waiting for a government to step in. You become more aware of others, a better man or woman to your friends and families, a better citizen of your country. You start to put your own difficulties in perspective. And soon you learn a great truth, that you always get more out of service than you give.

Your generation's willingness to serve will define the character of our Nation, and us older folks have good reason to be confident. Americans now in college are more likely to volunteer or become engaged in civic life than previous generations. Here at St. Vincent College, you have learned that service outside the classroom is as important as what you learn inside the classroom. The challenge for you is to keep this up as you begin your new careers and your new families and your new lives. So today I ask you to make service more than a line on your resume. Find a need that is not being met. Do your part to fill it, make a difference to our country.

I'm pleased to see that the class of 2007 is answering the call. In the graduating class today are five students who have volunteered to wear our Nation's uniform. You knew the risks of serving in a time of war, and you have volunteered to accept those risks. You have chosen a noble calling. You will take your place as officers in the finest military the world has ever known. At some point, the lives of other men and women will be in your hands, and they will need leaders of character and selflessness. As your Commander in Chief, I salute you for your service, and I ask Almighty God to keep you close as you keep our Nation safe.

There are many ways to serve our Nation. Across this great land of opportunity we have citizens with great needs. And for every need, there is a path to service.

Some of you have chosen the path of teaching. We all know a teacher who has made a difference in our lives. In my case, I married her. [*Laughter*] The First Lady showed me that teaching is more than a job or profession—it is a vocation. When you make the decision to become a teacher, you know that your reward will be greater than money. It will happen in wonderful moments when you see a student grasp a difficult concept, or come alive during the reading of a poem, or discover how a work of history speaks to our time. To do this for even one child is special. To do this for hundreds of children over a career will bring you satisfaction that few other professions can match.

The beauty of teaching is that its rewards can be found in any classroom. Some of you know this from your visits to St. Benedict's, an all-boys school in one of the poorest areas of New Jersey. For many of these boys, St. Benedict's is their only safe haven from the crime and drugs and hopelessness around them. Each Christmas holiday, several St. Vincent students spend time mentoring these young men.

One of your classmates, Anthony Fiumara, spent two breaks at St. Benedict's. Here's how he describes the experience: "I always knew that I wanted to be a teacher. But my time at Saint Ben's showed me that a teacher could become more than a dispenser of knowledge. When I talked with the students about their dreams of attending college, I re-

alized that as a teacher, I would be the one that would help them achieve their dreams."

Our Nation needs more teachers like Anthony—I'm so pleased that nearly four dozen members of this class have chosen to go into teaching. I thank you. And as you go forth, I ask you to set high standards in your classroom. Challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. Teach your students with respect. And always remember the ideals that attracted you to this noble profession.

Some of you may not yet have decided the best way to serve. It's okay. The Government can't put love in your heart. But what we can do is when you find love and find the drive, we can help put it in action. And that's why I created the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives that Mr. President ran. Through this office, we are helping to ensure that Federal funds for social service go to organizations that get results—even if they happen to have a crucifix or a Star of David on the wall.

We also established the USA Freedom Corps to help mobilize volunteers to bring the comfort and kindness of America to people both at home and abroad. Today, hundreds of thousands of volunteers mentor children, they assist the elderly, they build schools and clinics, they respond to natural disasters. No matter what your interests, no matter what your skills, there is a place for every one of you to serve in our armies—our Nation's armies of compassion.

Even if you can't devote yourself to a career of service, you can make a life of service. We have that on good authority from one of President Towey's great heroes: Mother Teresa. Mother Teresa's whole life was dedicated to doing small things with great love. I'm pleased that Jim is taking a group of you to Calcutta later this month. I hope it helps inspire a new generation to carry on her good works. In almost every documentary about Mother Teresa, you see her going to the side of someone who is suffering terribly—often about to die. She treats them with great gentleness, squeezing their hands and whispering words of comfort. Their look of wonder tells you that these are people who may be feeling loved for the first time in their lives. As they look up at Mother Teresa, their eyes say: Here's someone who cares.

One of your classmates, Kara Shirley, knows what I'm talking about. Just 2 months ago, Kara went on a service project to Brazil where she visited an AIDS clinic. The clinic was called Hope and Life. While there, she and the other students helped clean up after the patients, administer their medicine, and just sit by their bedsides holding their hands. One of these patients was a man who weighed just 70 pounds. When he was sent to this clinic, he had already been given his death certificate. But that only told the people at the clinic that this man needed even more love.

Here's how Kara puts it: "This man was so weak he could not even speak. But when I held his hand he turned his head, and you could feel the gratitude. It was one of the most moving experiences of my life—and by the end of my time there, I didn't want to leave." Kara's gesture was a—seemed like a small thing to hold a man's hand. But because it was done with great love, it helped fill a dying man's final days with dignity and grace.

I've met thousands of volunteers like Kara who serve their fellow citizens in many different ways. They put themselves in some of the harshest places in our country and in the world. Yet instead of telling me how hard they have it, they always tell me how fortunate they are.

You can know this joy in your own lives. All you need is a warm heart and a willing pair of hands. When Mother Teresa accepted her Nobel Prize, she told the story about visiting a nursing home. At first she was impressed by the home because it was attractive and well equipped. But she soon noticed that none of the residents were smiling, all were looking at the door. When she asked why everyone seemed so sad, one of the caretakers explained, "They are hurt because they are forgotten." They stared at the door in the hope that it would open and someone who loved them would walk through it.

My challenge to you today is this: Be the person who walks through that door. Be the face that brings a smile to the hurt and forgotten. Lead lives of purpose and character, make a difference in someone else's life. And if you do, you will lead richer lives, you will

build a more hopeful nation, and you'll never be disappointed.

My congratulations to you all. I ask for the Almighty God's blessings on you and your life. Thanks for letting me come and share my thoughts.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:24 a.m. in the Robert S. Carey Student Center. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Douglas R. Nowicki, Archabbot and chancellor, and H. James Towey, president, St. Vincent College; Donald W. Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington; Mary Towey, wife of H. James Towey; and Pope Benedict XVI.

Remarks on the Observance of Military Spouse Day and Presentation of the President's Volunteer Service Awards

May 11, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. Jeanine, thank you very much for kicking off with—an important event here in the White House. Today we honor six outstanding Americans who represent the very best of what volunteering means, and we honor the achievements of military spouses all across the Nation. You cannot be a nation with a volunteer army unless you honor the military families, and that's what we're doing today.

I like to tell people that the strength of this Nation is not our military, although we intend to keep it strong. The strength of the Nation is the fact that we've got compassionate, decent, honorable citizens who hear a call to love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself. And that's what we're here to honor.

Each of you is part of a legacy of service that harkens back to our country's earliest days. When Martha Washington—the husband—of the first George W.—[laughter]—organized sick wards for wounded soldiers and made visits to battlefields to boost the morale of the troops, she volunteered for a cause bigger than herself.

Through many conflicts, America's war fighters have counted on their spouses for love and support. Our communities have depended on your energy and your leadership.

Our Nation has benefited from our—the sacrifices of our military families. Today I've asked you to come so I can thank you on behalf of all the military families for your noble and needed service to the United States of America.

Not only am I saying it, but we've got some pretty distinguished group of folks who want to say the same thing. I will speak on their behalf, you'll be happy to hear: Secretary Bob Gates, Secretary of the Defense; Senator John Warner, Senator Craig Thomas, and Senator Mike Enzi; Congressman Chet Edwards—who happens to be President George W. Bush's Congressman from Central Texas—and Congressman Bob Filner have joined us to pay tribute to our military spouses, and I'm honored you all are here.

I also appreciate our military leadership who have joined us today. I can't think, by the way, of many times here in the East Room of the White House that the Joint Chiefs have come to pay tribute. I really can't. We have met before—we meet quite often, as a matter of fact—but never in a setting where we're paying tribute to people such as yourself.

Before I begin with our military leadership, I do want to thank Pete Geren, Acting Secretary of the Army—hopefully permanent Secretary of the Army as soon as the Senate moves his nomination. Pete, thank you for coming.

Anyway, I do want to introduce General Pete Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and his wife, Lynne; Admiral Mike Mullen, Chief of Naval Operations, and his wife, Deborah; General Jim Conway, Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, and his wife, Annette; General George Casey, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, and his wife, Sheila. We appreciate you all coming.

I'm also proud that Mary Jo Meyers, the wife of General Richard Meyers, retired, United States Air Force, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, is with us. And I appreciate Suzy Nicholson—Suzanne Nicholson, wife of Secretary Jim Nicholson, who is the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Thank you all for joining us. You honor us with your presence.

Pretty soon, we'll hear more about the President's Volunteer Service Award recipients. But I do want to thank your families for joining us. I thank members of the Armed Forces who have joined us today. I can't think of a more noble cause than for people to volunteer to protect our country in the face of grave danger. And it is a—I marvel at how fantastic our military is. And the reason why it's good is not only because we're modern and well trained, but we've got such wonderful people who wear the uniform. And we thank you for serving, and I appreciate your families who have joined us as well.

You know better than anyone that military service is a family commitment. As one wife in this audience recently noted, military spouses do not raise their right hands and take an oath of enlistment. Yet their service begins as soon as they say two words: "I do." [Laughter]

Military spouses enter into a life filled with uncommon challenges. One of the award recipients, Linda Port, has been a military spouse for nearly 21 years. Over that period, she has moved into and out of 17 different houses; she has enrolled her children in 9 different school districts. I see some heads that are nodding in recognition of what that means. This kind of life makes it hard to lay down roots, which is why it's so important that military families find strength and stability in each other.

Several of the spouses we honor today have made it their mission to build those needed networks of support. Linda worked as an advocate for 1,200 sailors and their spouses, so they could stay in contact during deployments. Michele Langford runs an association that works to unite Coast Guard spouses in her community. Cindy Bjerke co-chairs the Patriot Family Readiness Group, which provides information and resources to approximately 500 military families. These initiatives are making a difference. They are improving lives. And we're all here to thank you for the care and commitment you have shown for others.

Many military spouses have the added difficulty of spending long periods raising their children alone. Being a parent is hard work

under any circumstances—just ask my mother. [Laughter] Yet military spouses tend to have to go an extra mile. They raise their own families, and they find ways to help others as well. Michael Winton has been the primary caregiver for his daughter while his wife serves in the Air Force. Yet he also found time to coach sports teams, work with Habitat for Humanity and Fisher Nightingale Houses, visit veteran centers, and volunteer for a program that helps kids develop a love of reading.

Denise Rampolla is another example of the kind of person that we're honoring today. She appears to have worked with every civic organization in Cheyenne, Wyoming. [Laughter] Listen to the list: the Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce; the Cheyenne Parks and Recreation Community; the VFW Ladies Auxiliary; the Laramie County Emergency Response Team; and Cub Scout Pack 112. [Laughter] She's what we like to call a hard charger; she gets things done. Maybe we could use a little more of you in Washington. [Laughter]

Other military spouses have tackled personal adversity and used their experience to help others. Shannon Maxwell took on the role of caregiver when her husband, Tim, returned from Iraq with a severe head injury. Shannon took what she learned, got together with other military wives, and formed a support group to help our wounded warriors. They've raised over \$400,000 to help injured service members adjust to new lives and new challenges. And we thank you for what you're doing, Shannon. And we also appreciate Tim for his service in Iraq; glad you're here.

This is just a sampling of the good and important work performed every day by military spouses all across the country. I want you all to know that your work is noticed, your work is appreciated, and your work inspires our country.

Some of my most moving experiences as President have come during my visits with military families. Laura and I have had the privilege of meeting troops and their loved ones at bases all across the world. We've sat beside the bedsides of those who have been wounded in battle. We've met with wives and husbands who have received a folded flag. We have hugged the parents of soldiers lost

in combat. In these meetings, I have found that what motivates our servicemembers most is their love for their families. Oh, they love our country, but they really love their families. You're in their prayers every morning, their thoughts every day, and their dreams every night.

Some time ago, a naval aviator about to deploy to war wrote a letter to his fiancée. This letter may remind you of some of the letters you've received. His words back then were these: "For a long time I had anxiously looked forward to the day when we would go abroad and set to sea, but you have changed all that. I do want to go because it is my part, but now leaving presents itself not as an adventure but as a job."

That letter was mailed more than 60 years ago, addressed to my mother from my father. Millions of similar letters have been written since that war. And most of you likely have one that is special to you that you keep close to your heart.

I know that nothing can compensate for the sacrifices you endure while your spouse is away. And so do—a lot of people in Washington understand that. But you also got to know that our entire country stands with you; we love you, and we respect you. America has seen and survived many wars over many generations. What has remained constant is the love we have for each other, the nobility of duty, and the strength that our men and women in uniform find in their heroes who serve here at home.

And so we honor you today, whether you're in this room or around the United States of America. We thank you for your sacrifices. We thank you for supporting our Armed Forces. And we ask for God's blessings on you and your family.

And now I ask Lieutenant Colonel Floyd to please read the citations.

[At this point, Lt. Col. Samuel Floyd, USA, Army Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the awards.]

Thank you all for coming. I wish Laura were here to have been able to greet you. She would be just as impressed as I am today by the wonderful stories and the great compassion of our recipients who, I know if they

had to give a speech, would say they just—they're just doing what they love to do, and they represent thousands who are doing the same thing.

We're honored that you've joined us. May God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:57 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jeanine McDermott, wife of Capt. Michael McDermott, USA.

Statement on the Commencement Ceremonies at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia

May 11, 2007

Today and tomorrow, students of Virginia Tech will rise to receive the diplomas they have earned through years of hard work. They can be proud of their academic accomplishments and excited about the opportunities their degrees have opened up for them.

Laura and I salute the Virginia Tech class of 2007. We also remember the students and teachers whose lives were taken last month. They will always hold a special place in the hearts of this graduating class and an entire nation.

Over the past month, our country has witnessed the compassion and resilient spirit of the community at Virginia Tech. That spirit is on display this weekend in Blacksburg, where thousands of friends and family members have gathered to celebrate commencement and pray for this remarkable school. Our Nation joins them in prayer. And on this special occasion, Laura and I send our love and heartfelt wishes to the entire Hokie family.

Proclamation 8144—Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, 2007

May 11, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In every American community, committed law enforcement officers watch over our

neighborhoods and work to make our Nation a safer, more peaceful place. As we observe Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, we honor the men and women who serve the cause of justice, and we pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

By taking an oath to serve and protect their fellow citizens, law enforcement officers answer a vital calling and accept a profound responsibility. These extraordinary Americans work to uphold our laws and serve on the front lines in the fight against crime and terrorism.

We owe a lasting debt to those who sacrificed their lives while serving and protecting our fellow citizens. These fallen officers live on in our national memory as Americans whose courage and commitment have shown the true meaning of heroism. We offer our respect and prayers to their loved ones.

On Peace Officers Memorial Day and during Police Week, we recognize and honor the service and sacrifice of the men and women whose devotion to duty brings honor to our system of justice and makes America a better place.

By a joint resolution approved October 1, 1962, as amended, (76 Stat. 676), the Congress has authorized and requested the President to designate May 15 of each year as "Peace Officers Memorial Day" and the week in which it falls as "Police Week," and by Public Law 103-322, as amended, (36 U.S.C. 136), has directed that the flag be flown at half staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 15, 2007, as Peace Officers Memorial Day and May 13 through May 19, 2007, as Police Week. I call on all Americans to observe these events with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also call on Governors of the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as well as appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day. I further encourage all Americans to display the flag at half staff from their homes and businesses on that day.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:08 a.m., May 14, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on May 15.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

May 5

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Beltsville, MD, where he went mountain biking with members of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

May 6

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with President-elect Nicolas Sarkozy of France to congratulate him on his election victory.

The President declared a major disaster in Kansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding beginning on May 4 and continuing.

May 7

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India and President Mohammed Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. He then had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, in the Situation Room, the President had a video teleconference with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

In the afternoon, in the Yellow Oval Room, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted a luncheon for Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

In the evening, on the North Portico, the President and Mrs. Bush greeted Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip. They then participated in a photo opportunity in the Grand Foyer.

Later in the evening, in the East Room, the President and Mrs. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney and Mrs. Cheney, and Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip attended a performance by Itzhak Perlman.

The President announced his intention to nominate Henrietta Holsman Fore to be Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

May 8

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Yellow Oval Room, the President met with Republican Members of the House of Representatives.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush went to the British Embassy where they met with Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Later, they returned to the White House.

May 9

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then traveled to McConnell Air Force Base in Wichita, KS. Later, aboard Marine One, he traveled to Greensburg, KS, where he took an aerial tour of the area damaged by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding on May 4.

In the afternoon, the President took a walking tour of the damaged area and met with affected families. Later, in the Emergency Operations Center, he participated in a briefing on recovery efforts.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

May 10

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil and President

Vladimir Putin of Russia. He then had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Arlington, VA, where, at the Pentagon, he participated in a briefing by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates and Gen. Peter Pace, USMC, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. He then met with U.S. military personnel.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President and Mrs. Bush will host NATO Secretary General Jakob Gijsbert "Jaap" de Hoop Scheffer and Mrs. de Hoop Scheffer-van Oorschot at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on May 20–21.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ravic R. Huso to be Ambassador to the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The President announced his intention to nominate Howard Radzely to be Deputy Secretary of Labor and appoint him as a Labor representative on the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ned L. Siegel to be Ambassador to the Bahamas.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert Lance Boldrey to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation.

The President announced his intention to nominate John E. Osborn and Lezlee J. Westine to be members of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

The President announced his intention to nominate William S. Jasien and Mark S. Shelton to be Directors of the Board of Directors of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation (Securities Industry).

The President announced his intention to appoint Stephen E. Henry, James D. Range, and Edward R. Tinsley III as members of the Board of Directors of the Valles Caldera Trust.

The President announced his intention to appoint Barbara Bruin as a member of the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

The President announced his intention to appoint Michael Lewis Cromartie, Talil Eid,

and Leonard A. Leo as members of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission: Brad T. Barber; Don A. Christiansen; James F. Karpowitz; and Dallin Willard Jensen.

The President announced his intention to designate Michael O. Leavitt (chief delegate), William Raymond Steiger, and Warren W. Tichenor as delegates of the U.S. to the Sixtieth World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization.

The President announced his intention to designate the following individuals as alternate delegates of the U.S. to the Sixtieth World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization: John O. Agwunobi; Ann S. Blackwood; Julie L. Gerberding; David E. Hohman; Michael W. Miller; and Mary Lou Valdez.

May 11

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Pittsburgh, PA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Dan Wiesman. He then traveled to Latrobe, PA.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will host Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom at the White House on May 16–17.

The President declared a major disaster in Connecticut and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on April 15–27.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted May 7

William G. Sutton, Jr.,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of
Commerce, vice Albert A. Frink, Jr.

Submitted May 10

Robert Boldrey,
of Michigan, to be a member of the Board
of Trustees of the Morris K. Udall Scholar-
ship and Excellence in National Environ-
mental Policy Foundation for a term expiring
May 26, 2013 (reappointment).

Ravic Rolf Huso,
of Hawaii, a career member of the Senior
Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor,
to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plen-
ipotentiary of the United States of America
to the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

William S. Jasien,
of Virginia, to be a Director of the Securities
Investor Protection Corporation for a term
expiring December 31, 2009, vice Noe
Hinojosa, Jr., term expired.

John E. Osborn,
of Delaware, to be a member of the U.S.
Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy
for a term expiring July 1, 2009, vice Charles
William Evers III, term expired.

Howard Radzely,
of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of
Labor, vice Steven J. Law, resigned.

Mark S. Shelton,
of Kansas, to be a Director of the Securities
Investor Protection Corporation for a term
expiring December 31, 2008, vice Thomas
Waters Grant, term expired.

Ned L. Siegel,
of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary of the United States of
America to the Commonwealth of The Baha-
mas.

Lezlee J. Westine,
of Virginia, to be a member of the U.S. Advi-
sory Commission on Public Diplomacy for
a term expiring July 1, 2009, vice Marie So-
phia Aguirre, term expired.

**Checklist
of White House Press Releases**

The following list contains releases of the Office
of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as
items nor covered by entries in the Digest of
Other White House Announcements.

Released May 6

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster
assistance to Kansas

Released May 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Sec-
retary Tony Snow

Released May 8

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Sec-
retary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing
that the President signed S. 521

Released May 9

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Sec-
retary Tony Snow

Released May 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Sec-
retary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of
NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop
Scheffer

Text: Open Economies Policy Statement

Released May 11

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press
Secretary Scott M. Stanzel

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of
British Prime Minister Tony Blair

Statement by the Press Secretary: Political
Prisoners in Syria and Vietnam

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing
that the President signed H.R. 1681

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster
assistance to Connecticut

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved May 8

S. 521 / Public Law 110–25

To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse and customhouse located at 515 West First Street in Duluth,

Minnesota, as the “Gerald W. Heaney Federal Building and United States Courthouse and Customhouse”

Approved May 11

H.R. 1681 / Public Law 110–26

The American National Red Cross Governance Modernization Act of 2007